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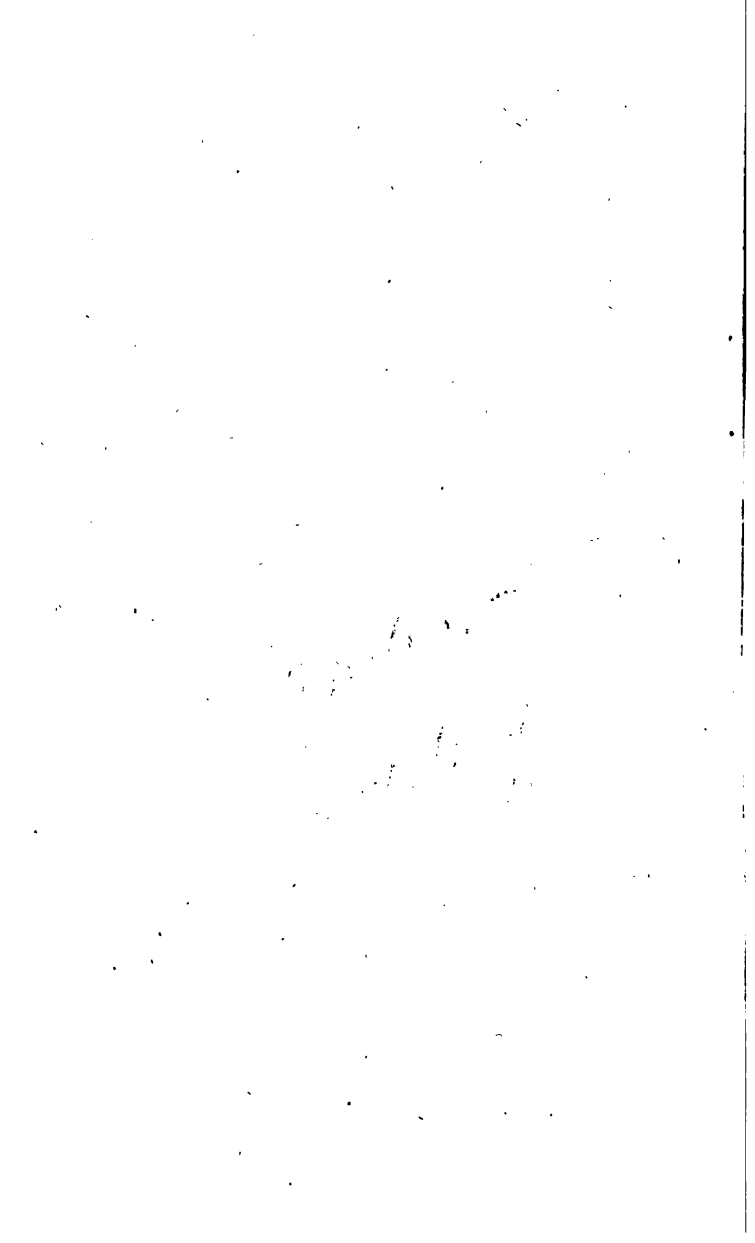
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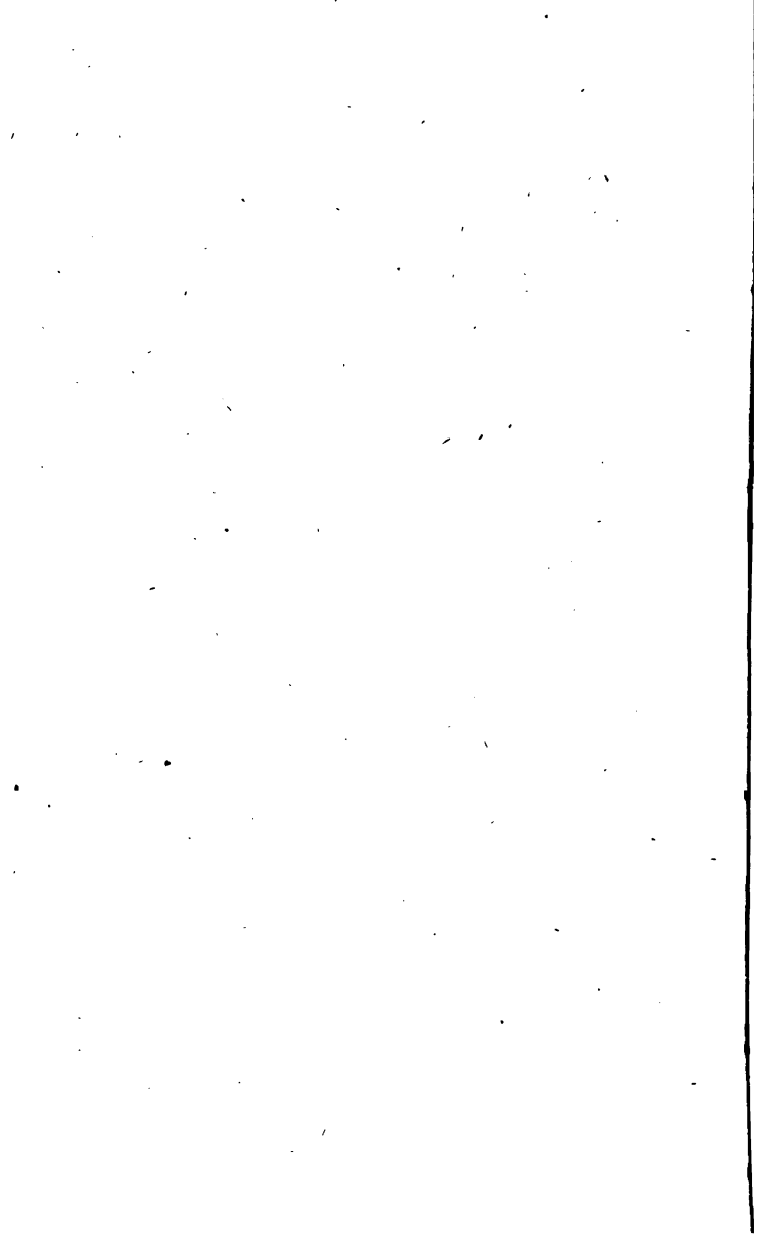
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· IN · HONOR · OF · HIS · NINETIETH · BIRTHDAY ·
— · MARCH 20TH 1924 · —
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A PRIZE ESSAY

ON

NATIVE FEMALE EDUCATION.

BY THE REV. K. M. BANERJEA,

MINISTER OF CHRIST CHURCH CORNWALLIS SQUARE.

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PREFACE.

IN presenting a second edition of the following work, at the recommendation of friends, the author begs to remind the reader of the circumstances under which it was originally composed and published. A European gentleman* offered a prize for the best essay on the subject, out of a sum placed at his disposal for advancing the cause of female education in India. Accordingly, in competing for the prize, the essayist felt himself invited to say many things in his address to Europeans, for which he might otherwise be considered unreasonably importunate.

It will be perceived that the author has spoken—sometimes, as if he were himself detached from the Hindu community,—sometimes, as if he still belonged to that corporation. The explanation of this seeming inconsistency may be given in a few words. He is by birth a Brahmin, by adoption a Christian, by profession a clergyman. As a citizen of Calcutta he is attached to the community of those who can boast of the time-honoured names of a Sandilya, a Kashyapa, a Bharadwaj, in the list of their ancestors; as a Christian and

* Captain Jameson of Baroda.

a clergyman, it is his privilege to belong to a spiritual corporation, which is superior to geographical definitions, and the freedom of which is not dependant on national distinctions ; of which, *he that feareth God and worketh righteousness* is eligible to be a member, whatever his race.

There is one melancholy reflection to which the present publication gives rise. The amiable and distinguished lady,* under whose patronage the first edition made its appearance, is now no more in the land of the living. It would be presumptuous in the author to attempt a recital of the excellencies which have enshrined her name in the hearts both of high and low. The cause which the following pages are designed to advance, has lost one of its warmest friends in her. The departure of a lady, who never allowed her rank to make her neglect the interests of those whom Providence had placed in an inferior position, is naturally felt as a loss by all who had ever participated in her kindness, or benefited from her benevolence : and excites regret in many quarters beyond the circle of her own relations and friends.

* The lady of General Sir Jasper Nicol's, late Commander-in-Chief in India. She died at Rome while returning home from this country.

A N E S S A Y
ON
NATIVE FEMALE EDUCATION.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

THE present tottering condition of Brahminism, occasioned by the free circulation of European knowledge, is an index not to be mistaken. It shows that the fabric reared by the labours of centuries has received a blow from which it can never recover. It predicts a mighty revolution sooner or later to overturn the institutions of Menu and Vyas, and to confound the philosophy of Gautama and Kapila. Not only has Hinduism now to withstand the organized and openly avowed attacks of British Missionaries, pledged to toil for the subversion of error, but multitudes of insidious opponents have also arisen from within its own

bosom, corroding, as so many destructive gangrenes, its very marrow and substance. Though commanding for centuries the most servile submission of high and low without exception, and firmly withstanding the philosophic hostility of Buddhism, the violent attacks of Islamism, and the insinuating arts of disguised Jesuitry, it has since been so violently shaken in the metropolis of British India by the gradual diffusion of education and the magical wand of European science, that its present appearance is that of a dilapidated system ready to crumble to the dust. Its authority is questioned, its sanctions are unheeded, its doctrines are ridiculed, its philosophy is despised, its ceremonies are accounted fooleries, its injunctions are openly violated, its priesthood is decried as a college of rogues, hypocrites, and fanatics; and all this, not by a confederate band of Buddhists, *Yavans*, and *Mletchas*, but by its own professed votaries; by those who are reckoned among the most respectable members of its own corporation, upon whose support depend its very vitals. Traitors in the camp are opening the way for enemies without. It does not, under such circumstances, require an extraordinary exertion of sagacity and penetration to foretel the dire catastrophe that awaits it. If its own followers be thus disaffected, and breathe such desperate hostility to it, the stronghold must share the fate of a house divided against itself. It must sooner

or later be demolished by the joint attacks of treacherous friends and inveterate enemies.

Such being the state of Hindu society, at least in the capital of Bengal, few questions can assume more vivid interest than that which stands as the theme of these pages. Under the present laxity of Hindu observances in Calcutta, while new habits, new manners, new sentiments, and new feelings, are daily imported into native society, it becomes a very imperative call upon every friend of humanity to remind the rising generation of their duty to the weaker sex, and to excite their attention to the subject of Female Education. For attempting to impart a favourable direction to the current of exotic sentiments pouring in from so many quarters, the present may be considered a peculiarly advantageous season. Native society in the metropolis is fast renouncing its characteristic obduracy, and evincing a disposition to accept a reform in its thoughts and actions. Why then may not a change in its treatment of females be deemed feasible? In the present transition-state of the Hindu mind, why may we not hope to infuse an ardent desire of educating the females, and of raising them to the position which nature has designed for them.

Under the influence of these impressions, the author's attention had long been directed to the duty of admonishing his countrymen on the obligations they owe

to their females ; and the public offer of a prize to the best attempt on the subject tallied harmoniously with his previous design.

But to compete for a prize in a foreign language may be considered a bold undertaking ; generally speaking one cannot pass such an ordeal with honor or advantage. The present instance was however so far an exception that the lists were open only to *natives of India*. Where every one had to run his race over ground equally rugged, no charge of temerity could be preferred against a particular competitor. This is the author's only apology for coming forward on this occasion.

In the distribution of the following Chapters, the author has been guided no less by the reasonableness of the division itself, than by the rules prescribed by those who offered the prize.

The present condition of those whose interests the Essay is designed to promote, might justly demand attention in the leading chapter. The consideration of their intellectual and moral capacities, with a view to determine their proper position in society, would naturally follow a review of their existing wretchedness ; while the means whereby they might be raised from their present degradation, would constitute very appropriately the third and last branch of our inquiry.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE PRESENT CONDITION OF NATIVE FEMALES.

To a succinct account of the present condition of females in Bengal, a general survey of the religious and social institutions to which they are subject, would not be an improper introduction. The influence which such institutions exercise upon human interests is unquestionably powerful in all parts of the world. The rule of life which religion prescribes, and the sovereign enforces, forms the habits, manners, and customs of a people; principles that are esteemed sacred, and laws which are enacted by authority, cannot fail to leave their stamp upon the mind; even those who consider priests as hypocrites and kings as tyrants cannot easily unlearn the respect and awe with which they are insensibly taught to contemplate the institutions of their country. The force of such institutions is still greater in India. In common with other oriental nations the Hindus are averse to the exercise of private judgment; their mental quietude is remarkable; they are incapable of the revolutionary suspicion that kings or priests may err; that politics or religion may admit of reform or improvement. Everything here is fixed by law; a text of Menu will silence the most obstinate; and antiquated institutions are allowed

to interfere with the commonest affairs of life. The habits which the follower of Brahminism is to contract, the mode in which he is to spend his day,^(a) are minutely and strictly regulated; he is not at liberty to awake or arise, clean or dress, read or worship, at any time or in any way that himself may choose.

(a) The following is a list of the *duties* which the Brahmin must religiously perform every day in the order in which they are here mentioned, and according to the manner prescribed under each head in the Shasters.

1. Answering the calls of nature.—2. Cleaning.—3. Washing.—4. Binding the hair.—5. Rules for taking water into the hand for purifying the mouth.—6. Brushing the teeth.—7. Morning bath and prayer.—8. Duties during the first eighth part of the day.—9. Those during the second eighth part.—10. Concerning writing.—11. Duties during the third eighth part of the day.—12. Those during the fourth eighth part.—13. Offerings of water to the manes of deceased relatives.—14. Prayer.—15. Worship.—16. Worship of the Sun.—17. Meditations on the Vedas.—18. Worship of the Gods.—19. That of Ganesha.—20. Of the lingam of Shiva.—21. Offerings of incense.—22. Of lighted candles.—23. Of eatables.—24. Rules for entertaining guests.—25. Offerings to cows.—26. Of eating.—27. Offering to the five *airs* of the body, and eating only with the fingers.—28. On the six seasons, and the food most appropriate for each.—29. The qualities of the six *tastes*.—30. Criteria for judging of different constitutions of the body.—31. Qualities of rice.—32. Of herbs and pulse.—33. Of salt.—34. Of fruits.—35. Of water.—36. Of milk.—37. Of curds.—38. Of sugar.—39. Of ghee.—40. Of sugar cane.—41. Duties during the sixth-eighth part of

He is bound hand and foot by the legislators of his country; and in the discharge of the most ordinary functions of life, he must bow before the authority of the ancients, and submit to the dictates of their fancy. The doctrine of implicit faith and passive obedience is nowhere so rampant as on the banks of the Ganges; whatever is written in the Shasters, whatever was the day.—42. Duties of the night.—43. Rules relating to making and going to bed.

Each of these heads has been largely dwelt upon in the *A'hniha Tattwu*, whence we have extracted them. The prescribed rules have scarcely left room for individual discretion in any of the actions just enumerated. The arrogance with which the Hindu legislators have ordained uniformity of observance in a *religious* way on the most indifferent and ordinary matters, cannot be contemplated without the utmost indignation and contempt; while the two-fold authority, to which they aspired, of *physical* and *spiritual* doctors, and the confidence with which they delivered opinions on the medicinal properties of eatables and drinkables,—and that under the pretended sanctions of the Most High,—may be somewhat amusing to the professors of *materia medica*. It was almost impossible, however, that such encroachments upon personal liberty could be tolerated for any considerable length of time. Custom has long since dispensed with this daily ritual; the rules laid down by our sapient lawgivers stand only as dead letters on their writings.

Mr. Colebrooke has made a digest of the ceremonies which Brahminism enjoins upon its votaries, whence European readers may derive some notion of the fetters by which the followers of this system are bound. See his *Miscellaneous Essays*, vol. i.

taught by revered sages, whatever is inculcated by living priests must be received without question. The tenacity with which such a system is maintained and upheld, and the jealousy with which innovations are regarded, might appear incredible, did we not know, that the majority of mankind were unable or unwilling to strike out new paths for themselves, and that opinions and prejudices, that had the sanction of great men and of antiquity, easily passed for time-honoured dogmas of unquestioned authority, and obtained without difficulty the tame submission of the indolent vulgar. Successful reformers, or opposers of popular opinion, are not characters of every day's growth; nor are many pages of history adorned by the lives of Wickliffs and Luthers.

Such servile submission to custom and practice without regard to their tendency for good or evil, such implicit faith in the wisdom or discretion of those who lived in the infancy of the world, can only serve to fix human society in a stagnant state of degradation and semi-barbarism. Excessive deference to the opinions of spiritual guides has in all ages proved injurious both to pastor and flock; the meekest spirits have been spoilt by the adulations paid to them; the strongest intellects have deteriorated by grovelling superstition. The most formidable obstacles have thereby been interposed in the course of human improvement; the greatest checks

have been given to the well-being of human society. Man has not been allowed to outgrow the errors of his forefathers, and the corruptions of dark and unenlightened ages have become rivetted upon the unhappy countries where they had once chanced to take root. The haughtiest kings, the mightiest princes, have been charmed to submission by the magical wand of superstition; and have stooped before the shrine of antiquated opinions and prejudices. Even when the temporal sword has clashed with the spiritual, the latter has frequently exhibited a sharper edge than the former, and kings have rued their rash movements against the pretended vice-gerents of God. The chains of corrupt antiquity have thus galled the lives of *men*, could women then escape the common scourge? If the effects of laws and institutions are so glaringly visible in the society of *men*, could the community of *females* be uninfluenced by them?

A short review, therefore, of the institutions of our country, especially as they regard the female sex, will serve as a comment upon the present state of our female society. Few subjects however are more difficult of a methodical description than this. So intricate, so various, and so seemingly conflicting are its multifarious ramifications, that it would be highly presumptuous in a person of ordinary talents to pretend to much accuracy and precision in his representations; and the difficulty of the task becomes still more appalling, when the picture

is to be drawn in a foreign language, and for the inspection of men to whom the features of our female society are entirely unknown.

We shall commence our review with adverting to an institution by no means peculiar to the Brahminical ritual. Like the Levitical dispensation, the Hindu religion pronounces a woman to be unclean upon her confinement. A separate room is not unreasonably allotted to her, where she must complete her period of purification, which in the case of a male child lasts for three weeks, but is prolonged to a whole month in the case of a female offspring(b).

A more marked and invidious distinction between male and female children is perceived at a ceremony which follows the delivery of a woman. On the sixth night after parturition, the eventful night, big with the new-born infant's fate, when Vidhàtá is supposed to mark upon its forehead, in unseen, but indelible, characters, its pre-ordained fortunes, the goddess *Shashthi*, the tutelar guardian of infants, is worshipped. Offerings

(b) सूतिकां पुत्रवतीं विंशतिरात्रेण स्नातां
सर्वकर्माणि कारयेत् मासेन स्त्रीजननीं

A mother having brought forth a boy may be allowed to do her accustomed work, bathing after twenty nights; but after a month, when she is delivered of a girl.—*PAITHANASI in the Suddhi Tattwa.*

and adorations are paid to her in order to render her propitious to the child lately born, and thereby to ensure its life and health. The peculiar way, in which the prayers, (c) to be offered upon the occasion, were composed, should not of itself be taken for an index of disregard to the weaker sex. It is neither uncommon nor unnatural for formularies of religion to use masculine nouns and pronouns even when the intention is to include females. The Bible itself does not exclude *women*, when apparently it talks only of *men*; *πας ὁ πιστευων* does not shut out *πασα ἡ πιστευσα*. Declarations of doctrine and ceremonial forms admit great latitude of interpretation, when the immemorial practice of the society by which they are transmitted does not fix a narrower signification. But in the instance under review not only is the phraseology applicable to *male*

(c) आवाहि वरदे देवि महावशीति विद्युता ।

अस्मिन्त्येष मे पुत्रं रक्ष जागर असरे ।

गौर्याः पुत्रो यथा स्कन्दः सदा संरक्षित स्वया ।

तथा ममाप्ययं बाबो रक्षतां वक्षि ते नमः ।

“Come, O thou blessing-dispensing goddess! celebrated by the name of the Great Shashthi, and by thy divine energy protect my *son* in the watch-room.

“As Scanda the son of Gouri, was ever guarded by thee, so may this my *son* be likewise preserved! Reverence to thee, O Shashthi!”—*Jyotis Tattwa*.

children alone, but the supplications are never used in practice *except* in their case. The ceremony is attended with festivities when a son is born, but is entirely omitted when a female child comes into the world.

This difference in parental anxiety for the life and health respectively of sons and daughters, is not an improper criterion for estimating the value that is set upon them severally. We cannot blame our countrymen for the extreme eagerness with which they long for male offspring in preference to female. The natural superiority of the former, both mental and physical, induces the mother no less than the father to participate in that desire. Neither is such preference confined to India. The religion and politics of all countries attach greater importance to a boy than a girl. The boy is *the hope* of a family. We have no right to reprove the Hindus on this account. But where a religious ceremony, supposed to ensure a child's life and health, is dispensed with in the case of a girl, the omission may be considered invidious.

The same spirit pervades the Hindu Institutes with reference to the subject of education. Provision has been religiously made for the mental development of boys; guardians are solemnly enjoined to introduce them to the study of literature at the age of five. This initiation is to be accompanied with invocations to *Saraswati*, the goddess who presides over letters, and

to be conducted throughout as a holy sacrament (*d*). The position in which the tutor and the pupil are respectively to be seated, the direction in which their faces are to be turned, have been religiously regulated. The mode in which the work of tuition is to be prosecuted, the occasions when there must be vacation, and even the *kind of letters* that a good scribe ought (*e*) to attempt, have been prescribed as objects of faith, and are received as matters of revelation.

(*d*) सम्प्राप्ते पञ्चमे वर्षे अप्रसुप्ते जगार्द्धने

* * * विद्यारम्भन्तु कारयेत् पूजयित्वा हरिं

लक्ष्मीं देवीञ्चापि सरस्वतीं ।

“At the age of five, when *Janārdan* (Vishnu) is not in a state of slumber, a boy is to be made to commence the study of letters, Hari, Lakshmi, and Saraswati having been first worshipped.”—*Vishnu Dharmottara*.

(*e*) प्राङ्मुखो गुरुदासीनो वरुणाभिमुखं शिशुं ।

अध्यापयेच्च प्रथमं दिवाशीर्भिः प्रपूजितं ।

शीर्षोपेतान् सुसम्पूर्णान् समश्रेणीगतान् समान् ।

अक्षरान् विलिखेद्यस्तु लेखकः स परः स्मृतः ॥

“The tutor sitting with his face towards the east is to instruct the pupil having his face turned towards the west.”—*Vrihaspati*.

“He is a good scribe whose letters meet at the top, are full, and well arranged in the line.”—*Matsyapurana*.

But in these detailed rules concerning initiation into learning, no precepts are found imposing any obligation upon parents to instruct their *female* children. (f) The silence of the Hindu writers on the important question of female education, while they are so minute in their provisions for the intellectual culture of boys, may be construed into a disregard for the sex; it indicates their ignorance of the vast influence which women exercise over the happiness and well-being of society. They did not seem to understand that a nation could never rise in the scale of civilization, while illiterate mothers and wives obstructed its growth by perpetuating the moral degradation of the present and the rising generations.

But the Shasters have gone further than neglecting, by mere passive silence, the interests of womankind. Females are strictly prohibited to read or hear the Vedas. This privilege is restricted to the first three castes; neither the servile class, nor women, being at liberty to read, chant, repeat, or even to hear those sacred

(f) A friend who reviewed the first edition of this work pointed out the following passage from the Mahanirvan Tantra, prescribing the duty of educating females :

कन्याप्येवं पालनीया शिक्षणीयातिथत्तः ।

देवा वराय विदुषे धनरत्न समन्विता ।

The daughter should likewise be nursed and educated with care, and married with gifts of money and jewels to a learned man."

compositions. Shasters of inferior sanctity, such as the Puranas, the Smriti, &c. may be listened to by the proscribed classes while the Brahmin reads them; but the holy sentences which issued from the mouth of Brahmá, are not to be (g) desecrated by either passing their unholy lips, or entering into their profane ears.

And as pronunciation, (h) grammar, versification, arithmetic, mixed mathematics, were included in the number of the Vedángas, or members of the Vedas, an almost impassable barrier may be said to have been

(g) स्त्रीभूद्रद्विजवन्धूनां त्रयी न श्रुतिगोचरा

“The Vedas are not even to be *heard* either by the servile class, women, or degraded Brahmins.”—*Shri Bhágavat*.

नास्ति स्त्रीणां क्रिया मन्त्रैः

“Women have no business with the texts of the Veda.”—*Menu ix. 18*.

A few solitary instances are on record of the Vedas being expounded to females; the most striking example is that of Yagnawalkya catechizing his wife Maitreyi.

(h) शिक्षाकल्पौ व्याकरणं छन्दो ज्योतिष मेव च ।

निरुक्तश्चेत्यङ्गानि वेदानां गदितानि षट् ॥

“Pronunciation, description of sacred rites, grammar, versification, pure and mixed mathematics, and glossarial explanation of obscure terms are the six members of the Vedas.”—*Amara*.

The friendly reviewer, already referred to, is inclined to think that the *Vedangas* are not forbidden to the classes to whom the study of the Vedas is decidedly prohibited. This is perhaps a point open to controversy.

opposed to the education of the Shudras and the women. No language could be studied without its grammar; and no education would be of much worth, whence arithmetic and other elements were carefully excluded. The Indian sages have sapped the very foundation of female education by placing grammar upon a basis not easily accessible to the sex; they appear to have studiously retarded their intellectual progress by representing some of the ordinary branches of knowledge as members of the interdicted Vedas. The effects produced by these restrictions are female ignorance, and female misery. The key whereby the treasures of learning might be unlocked was denied to this devoted class, and a seal was set upon some of its most useful and important parts, which they dared not break.

It would, however, be unjust to the Shasters not to acknowledge that the prohibitions extended no further than to the authorized grammars and scientific works in the Sanscrit language; the proscribed classes were not excluded from the enjoyment of other sources and kinds of instruction. They were at liberty to learn the *Prakrita*, which then stood in the same relation to Sanscrit as Bengali, Hindui, and other dialects now do;—they might even study the sacred language itself, if they could dispense with the patent grammars. But as uneducated females were not the most suitable persons for mastering a language in spite of difficulty

and obstacle, the indulgence has been productive of hardly any solid benefits.

To exonerate the Shasters still more from the heavy charge of obstructing female education, we must mention the existence of several examples, recorded with applause, of women that had successfully pursued the study of literature. Of these, the first place is undoubtedly due to Lilávati, the daughter of Udayanáchárya, whose name has been rendered immortal in two works, one on *Jyotis*, and the other on *Nyáya*, (i) both designated after her. Tradition attributes to her extraordinary learning and intelligence; she is said to have been appealed to as judge in a philosophical controversy held between the famous *Shankaracharya* and her husband. Another name, already given in a note, occurs often in the Shasters, proving that female education was not rigorously forbidden. Yagnawalkya is frequently introduced as instructing his wife on the doctrines of the Vedas, and unfolding to her the mysteries of the esoteric philosophy. Lilavati and Maitreyi were how-

(i) "The treatise on the *Nyáya*, above referred to, is by many believed to be Lilávati's own composition, although the book itself (at least the copy I have used, being that which belonged to the Library of Fort William College, and is now preserved in the Asiatic Society's Museum) purports to be the production of *Acharya Ballabha*. It is also a commonly received opinion that there were two Lilavatis, the heroines of the two works mentioned above.

ever among a few happy exceptions. The other educated females of whom we read, did not profit much by the study of letters; amatory composition and clandestine correspondence appear to have been the principal uses to which they had turned their attainments. This unhappy circumstance, the natural consequence not of learning itself or of a well-regulated education, but of the restraints under which they were placed, and of the mis-direction that was given to their taste, produced, in process of time, a prejudice against their improvement, the effects of which are sadly visible in the present state of society.

We must also mention, that although the Shasters have thrown many obstructions in the way of female education, by breathing a spirit of hostility to the weaker sex, and apparently excluding certain branches of knowledge from their participation, they speak nevertheless in terms of commendation of their learning, where examples of superior females are incidentally noticed. The Hindu writers had sufficient respect for intellectual acquirements to laud them even in women; and therefore characters like Lilāvati and Maitreyi are esteemed, instead of being depreciated. Every instance, however, where they speak of *learning* with reference to females, is not to be considered as decidedly one of intellectual cultivation: for the word *vidushi* is not unfrequently applied to persons that had merely good practical sense, but had never turned their attention to the study of letters.

Notwithstanding the partial encouragement which the Shasters give, the conventional rules of society have for ages proved so cruel towards the sex, that it is now considered almost disreputable to furnish them with opportunities of education. Although the Brahmin can bring nothing either out of his theology or his philosophy which might be construed into a prohibition of their instruction, yet the tone of society has so long been raised against this humane proceeding, that no Hindu can attempt it without encountering the opposition, sarcasm, and brow-beating, which a firm resistance of popular prejudices, and of the influence of a false priesthood, has always in every country to withstand. Taunts and sneers, so powerful in their operation on ordinary minds, are likely to damp the energies and disconcert the efforts of the friends of humanity under present circumstances : and this is one of the reasons why numbers approve in theory, without reducing to practice, the great question of female emancipation.

The customs of disposing of females by very early marriages, and of shutting them up in the Zenana, have helped in a fearful manner to perpetuate their ignorance and misery. It is a lasting disgrace upon Hinduism that marriage should be considered a gift (j)

(j) The words of Menu are very expressive :

यस्य दद्यात् पिता त्वेनां आता वा नुमते पितुः ।

तं शुश्रूषेत जीवन्तं संस्थितञ्च न लङ्घयेत् ।

on the part of the father to a person of his own selection, and not a contract solemnized by the parties themselves. That the parent and natural guardian has a right to direct his own daughter in the most sacred of all civil engagements,—one on which her happiness and welfare mainly depend,—cannot for a moment be called in question. The most enlightened laws forbid a girl's marriage, while she is under age, against her father's consent, and recommend her to follow his superior advice even after she is at liberty to act for herself: the Liturgy of the Church of England itself requires that the father or some friend should *give* her away to be married to her husband elect. The father to whom her infancy and childhood were entrusted by Providence ought never to stand an unconcerned spectator of a ceremony which binds her for life to another individual, and makes her a sharer of his joys and sorrows; nor should a dutiful daughter despise the counsel of age and experience, tendered for her own happiness and comfort, by one that had nourished and cherished her in the helpless state of infancy. But that the father should be the principal or the sole party in the formation of the contract; that, not contented with a mere *veto*, he should imperiously dictate his daughter's choice;

Ch. 5, v. 151, which Sir W. Jones has thus rendered, “Him to whom the father has given her, or her brother with the paternal assent, let her obsequiously honour while he lives; and when he dies, let her never neglect him.”

or that the girl should have a perfect stranger, whom she had never seen, forced upon her as her husband, is a monstrous error, that could only be sanctioned by the most depraved society. No human superior, however sacred his title to reverence, and how unquestionable soever his right to advise and direct, should take upon himself to close this most sacred of all contracts without the consent, declared *ex animo*, of the parties concerned. The father might for a thousand reasons pitch, with the best intentions, upon a person with whom his daughter could never be happy. He might, in his anxiety to secure an honorable alliance for his family, or a wealthy consort for his child, overlook numberless discordances between the parties, in point of taste, feeling, and sentiment, for which no rank or fortune could be an adequate compensation, and which would perhaps render the unfortunate girl miserable for life.

The shasters legalized certain other modes of marriage which would reflect as little honor on our legislators. The *Gandharva* union was a desecration of holy matrimony for which the female was the only sufferer. The husband might follow the impulse of his passion and multiply his wives without restraint; the wife became a victim for life if once she gave way to a momentary feeling. The case of the king in the *Sacuntala*, unable to recognize the victim of his own pleasures, is a sufficient proof of the evil against which we are inveighing.

The *Rakshas* matrimony (*k*) is another instance of the disregard shown to the happiness of the female sex. The dishonor of females, taken captives by force, is unscrupulously allowed to the military class. An outrageous soldiery, pampered with success, cannot indeed be easily restrained ; they will not readily acknowledge that victory gives no absolution from the obligations of common morality ; no martial discipline which our legislators could dictate could perhaps have enforced the calls of justice, moderation, and humanity in the moment of victory. But shame to the philosopher and theologian who could so far forget his position as gravely to sanction such excesses against innocent females, and hold it up to admiration as a soldier-like act in the sons of Mars.

We must not here overlook a practice that sometimes prevailed in former ages, but is now entirely discontinued, of allowing a daughter to select her own husband from a number of suitable persons invited for that purpose. This appears, however, to have been restricted to the royal families. The

(*k*) इत्वा च्छित्वा च भिस्त्वा च क्रोशन्तीं बदतीं गृह्णात् ।
प्रसङ्ग कन्याहरणं राष्ट्रसोविधिबन्धते ॥

“ The seizure of a maiden by force from her house, while she weeps and calls for assistance, after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in battle or wounded, and their houses broken open, is the marriage styled *Rakshasa*.” Menu iii. 33. This kind of marriage is in the 26th verse pronounced *admirable* for the military classes.

only instances on record are those of kings convening assemblies of princely suitors, and permitting their daughters to select their own husbands. But even this practice was connected with many serious evils. The princesses had to make a hasty selection *on the spot* from a number of persons they had never seen or known : there could be little room for consideration in making such a choice ; the external appearance of the suitors and the impulse of the moment would probably alone decide the question. The practice of *Swayambara* was a mockery, scarcely better calculated to ensure their happiness, than the mode in which matrimony was otherwise contracted.

The present custom of getting rid of daughters by an early marriage, before they can possibly understand the meaning of marriage, must exert a baneful influence upon their minds, and put a stop to all intellectual improvement. The Shasters enact that a girl (1) must

(1) सप्तसम्बत्सरादूर्द्धं विवाहः सार्व्वर्षिकः ।
 कन्यायाः शस्यते राजन्नन्यथा धर्मगर्हितः ॥
 षट्त्वर्षा भवेद्गौरी नववर्षा तु रोहिणी ।
 दशमे कन्यका प्रोक्ता षतऊर्द्धं रजस्रजा ॥
 तस्मात्सम्बत्सरे प्राप्ते दशमे कन्यका बुधैः ।
 प्रदातव्या प्रयत्नेन न दोषः काणदोषतः ॥
 पितुर्गौहे च या कन्या रजः पश्यत्यसंस्कृता ।
 न्यूयद्दत्त्वा पितुः कस्याः सा कन्या वृषणी स्मृता ॥

be bound by the ties of wedlock before the age of ten; while the eighth is pointed out as the most proper season for imposing a husband upon her. The gift of a daughter at the latter age is considered the most meritorious way of disposing of her. The misery and unhappiness which this law must occasion to its female victims, can be more easily conceived than delicately expressed. Before the dawn of reason enables them to use the eyes of their understandings for any purpose, they find themselves already bound by an indissoluble tie; and when they

यश्च तां वरयेत् कन्यां ब्राह्मणो ज्ञानदुर्व्वलः ।

अश्रद्धेयमपांक्तैयं तं विद्यादृषलीपतिं ॥

“The marriage of a girl (whatever her caste) is to be celebrated after she is seven years old, otherwise it becomes contrary to the dictates of religion. At the age of eight she becomes a *Gouri*, (that is, her father by giving her away at this age obtains the merit attached to the gift of *Gouri*,) at the age of nine she becomes a *Rohini*, and at the age of ten a mere virgin. Her youth commences if she is older. Therefore the wise are to dispose of her before the close of her tenth year, even if the time were otherwise inauspicious or improper. The father of an unmarried girl, that has passed her tenth year, incurs the crime of *destroying* her *embryo*, and such a girl brings upon herself the stigma of a *Vrishali*. The weak-minded Brahmin that espouses such a girl loses his title to funeral obsequies, and ought to be turned out of society as the husband of a *Vrishali*.” *Bhavadeva Bhatta* in *Udvaḥa Tattwa* and *Atri* and *Káshyapa*.

attain to the age of puberty, they must suit themselves to the yoke as best they can. The females of Hindustan are celebrated for their patience and submission ; hence they easily reconcile themselves to their fates ; but the violence by which a rational creature is forced into the bed of a stranger must, in minds not altogether lost to moral sensibility, be associated with the utmost horror and disgust, and can be characterized by no better title than *shameful prostitution*. The moral influence of such a system upon the unhappy girl's mind must be equally sad. Before reason and judgment are allowed to gather strength, and before any principles are formed, the animal passions are artificially ripened, in a precocious way, by the presence of an object calculated to inflame them, and the connivance of an agent interested in their premature development.

Their total exclusion from society is no less an obstacle to their education and happiness. Just at the time when they should learn letters, and pursue a

Menu has somewhat softened the rigor of these rules by sanctioning the postponement of a girl's marriage if a well qualified husband is not found.

काममाभरणान्तिष्ठेत्पुत्रे कन्यार्त्तमत्यपि ।

नचैवैनां प्रयच्छेत्, गुणहीनाय कर्हिचित् ॥

“ It is better that a maiden, though of full age, should remain unmarried all her life, than that she should ever be given to a worthless husband.”—*Institutes* ix. 89.

course of intellectual study, they are consigned to close imprisonment in the Seraglio, and are made inaccessible to any but the nearest relations. It is not the Mahometan conquest, as many are apt to suppose, whence we are to date the commencement of their exclusion from society. The division of a house into courts—that for the women being called the *inner house*,—and the inability of a stranger to get admittance therein, are plainly adverted to in the Shasters; while the epithet of (m) *Asuryampashyá*, applied to females, sufficiently proves of itself their condition in this respect. The female department of a Hindu's residence was as much secured in times of yore, as it is now found to be ;(n) and the

(m) See the meaning of असूर्यम्पश्य in Wilson's Sanscrit Dictionary.—Lakshmana thus expresses his astonishment on finding a woman, walking in a desert wild :—

असूर्यम्पश्यरूपा त्वं किमभीरुरार्यप्रसे

“ What ! art thou wandering fearless, whose form is that of one who should not see even the sun ? ”—*Bhatti*.

(n) Rukmini, daughter of the king of Vidarbhs, a few days before her expected marriage with a person for whom she had no esteem, writing to Krishna, the report of whose accomplishments had attracted her affections, thus takes notice of the obstacles which lay in the way of her lover's access to her :

श्रीभाविनि त्वमजितोदहने विदर्भान्
गुप्तः समेतप्र पृतनापतिभिः परीतः ।
निर्मथप्र चैद्यमगधेश्वरं प्रसह्य

fair inhabitants of the Zenana were nearly as much forbidden to tread the outer courts, except upon special occasions, as they are in our own times. The Mahometans may have confirmed the practice by the outrages which they often committed in the country, and rendered the exclusion closer, but they were certainly not its originators.

That under the circumstances that existed there were cogent reasons for the enforcement of this practice, can scarcely be doubted. The honor and virtue of the females would perhaps be subjected to too severe a test, if in their uneducated and ignorant condition no restraints were put upon their liberty. But this jealous provision was, in fact, the adoption of one evil in order to counteract the unhappy influence of another which was *wilfully* perpetuated. The first barbarous act of consigning them to ignorance, was of itself sufficiently iniquitous; and all subsequent strictures by way of remedy, must partake of the same character. An improved state of society would have condemned both the one and the other acts of male tyranny. The female mind ought to have been fortified by instruction and education; and, rendered thus superior

मां राक्षसेन विधिनोद्धृ वीयर्षुष्कां ॥

अन्तःपुरान्तरचरीमनिहत्तत्र बन्धू

स्त्वामुद्धृ कथमिति प्रवदान्मुपायं ।

पूर्वेदुर्गस्ति महती कुलदेवयात्रा

यस्यां वह्निर्नववधू गिरिशा मुपेयात् ॥

to the weaknesses incident to ignorance, they should have been allowed to act their parts as rational members of society.

The multiplication of wives, which the Shasters tolerate, is another fruitful source of suffering to the female sex. It reflects great disgrace upon human nature that this evil has existed almost in every country ;

“ Having come, O thou invincible one ! secretly into Vidarbha at the head of thy officers on the day before the marriage, and having subdued the forces of Shishupala and the king of Magadha, carry me away suddenly as the just reward of thy valour, agreeably to the rules of *Rakshas matrimony*. If thou ask, how thou shalt take me’ who am secured in the recesses of the palace, without killing my friends and relations, I will tell thee an expedient by which thy way may be cleared. There is on the day before the matrimony a great family procession, when the bride must issue out for the purpose of worshipping Girisha.”—*Shri. Bhag.* 10th Scandha.

The celestial swan, who cuts such a prominent figure in the *Naishadha*, and who was boasting of the lessons he had given on gesticulation to the ladies of a royal family, attributes his admittance into their company to his volant powers :

अवारितद्वारतया तिरश्चा मन्तःपुरे तस्य निविश्य
राज्ञः । गतेषु रम्येषु धिकं विशेष मध्यापयामः
परमाणुमध्याः ॥

“ The recesses of the palace not being inaccessible to birds, we enter therein and instruct the beauteous queens on the most graceful gesticulation.”—*Naishadha*, chap. iii.

When Nala got access, by an especial and miraculous providence of the gods, into the quarters of Damayanti, daughter of Bhims, he inquires with astonishment :

that females have been considered as servile ministers of pleasure, and that before the introduction of Christianity, the principle of a steady and faithful attachment to one wife, was unknown on the face of the earth.(o)

The perpetual widowhood to which the death of their husbands dooms the Bengal females, must prove another source of misery and wretchedness. The Hindu laws are exceedingly severe on this point. The first and the most meritorious course which is recommended to them on the loss of their partners in life, is self-immolation. Hence arose that inhuman practice of the Suttee, the abolition of which has redounded so much to the honor of Lord W. Bentinck, Governor-General of India, whose name is enshrined in the hearts of the Hindus, no less for this act of humanity, than for his general policy in governing the country for the benefit of the *people*. Rewards of the most attractive kind are offered to poor illiterate widows,

कथमागमनं चेह कथं चासि न लक्षितः ।

सुरक्षितं हि मे वेदम राजा चैवोयशासनः ॥

“How is it thou hast come here? How is it thou hast not been observed? For my quarters are well guarded, and the king is severe in his discipline.”—*Mahabharata*.

We do not mean to assert that females were excluded in ancient times with the same rigor as at the present day; but the practice is not entirely owing to the Mahometans.

(o) Cecrop's law, and perhaps a few others, are happy exceptions.

n order to propel them to an atrocious suicide, from which nature itself would shrink with horror ; and a number of ceremonies, calculated to stifle the voice of reason and judgment, helps to fulfil the bloody intentions of our unfeeling legislators. (p) But self-immolation had something so horrible in it, that in spite of the allurements that were held forth, and the fascinations of the ceremonies that were instituted, the voice of reason and nature would often be heard, and many a woman recoil with horror from the idea of putting a violent period to her existence. The crafty fabricators of the

(p) मृते भर्त्तरि या नारी समारोहेद्भुताशनं ।

सारुन्धती समाचारा स्वर्गलोके महीयते ॥

तिस्रः कोट्योर्द्ध कोटी च यानि लोमानि मानवे ।

तावन्तप्रदानि सा स्वर्गे भर्त्तारं यानुगच्छति ॥

The wife who commits herself to the flames on the death of her husband shall equal Arundhati, and reside in Swerga. She who thus follows her husband shall dwell in heaven as many years as there are hairs on the human body, even three and half crores of years. *Angiras in Shuddhi Tattwa.*

आर्त्तात्ते मुदिता हृष्टे प्रोषिते मलिना कृशा ।

हृते म्रियेत या पत्न्या साध्वी क्षेया प्रतिव्रता ॥

“ She, whose sympathy feels the pains and joys of her husband, who mourns and pines in his absence, and dies when he dies, is a good and loyal wife.”—*Harita* in ditto.

ऋग्वेद वादात् साध्वी स्त्री न भवेदात्मघातिनी ।

“ According to the Rig-Veda the loyal wife shall not be deemed a suicide”—*Brahma Purana* in ditto.

Shasters were aware of the powerful obstacle which nature would thus oppose to the execution of their inhuman recommendations, and they have, accordingly, kept up their ungracious tyranny against the sex, by enacting a series of the severest rules for the regulation of a widow's life. Not only is she strictly prohibited to enter again into the state of wedlock, even when she loses her husband in early life, but she is also required to practise the most rigorous austerities, and to mortify herself, as it were, to death. The widow shall never exceed one meal a day, nor sleep on a bed. She is to take no care of her person, nor regale herself by any aromatic cordial (*p*¹). She is to observe a rigid fast on every eleventh day of the lunar fortnight, besides many other occasional abstinences. She is forbidden to taste animal food of any kind ; and even the one meal of pulse, roots, and vegetables that is allowed to her, must consist only of such articles as can be cooked together in one pot, to make up a single dish.

The reasons for which they are forbidden to marry a second time arise from the notion, (*q*) that even death does not loosen the tie of wedlock, and that a husband's

(*p*¹) एकाहारः सदा कार्येण द्वितीयः कदाचन

पर्यङ्कं श्रायिनी नारी विधवा पातयेत् पतिं

गन्धद्रव्यस्य सम्भोगो नैव कार्यस्तथा पुनः

(*q*) यस्य नोपरता भार्या देहाद्द्वं तस्य जीवति ।

"He whose widow is not dead, has half his body in the land of the living."—*Yagnawalkya*.

future happiness depends, in a great measure, upon the strictness with which his widow performs the accustomed offerings to his manes. If she enter again into the state of matrimony, her affinity with the deceased husband must cease ; she must be incapacitated to practise those rites which are so closely connected with his future interests. “ And when he dies,” say Menu, “ let her never neglect him.”

The perpetual pupilage to which the Bengal females are condemned, is of a piece with the institutions just noticed. They can never be independent ; they must ever remain subject to the controul of some relation or other. In infancy their fathers and natural guardians are masters of their persons ; in youth they must submit to their husband’s yoke ; and in widowhood their sons become their (r) lords.

(r) वाञ्छया वा युवत्या वा वृद्धया वापि योषिता ।

न स्वातन्त्र्येण कर्त्तव्यं किञ्चित् कर्म गृहेषुपि ॥

वाल्मे पितुर्वशे तिष्ठेत् पाण्डियाहस्य यौवने ।

पुत्राणां भर्त्तरि प्रेते न भजेत् स्त्रीसूतद्वतां ।

“ By a girl or by a young woman, or by a woman advanced in years, nothing must be done even in her own dwelling place according to her mere pleasure. In childhood must a female be dependent on her father ; in youth on her husband ; her lord being dead, on her sons : a woman must never see independence.”

—Menu.

वृते भर्त्तर्यप्रपुत्रायाः पतिपक्षः प्रभुः स्त्रियाः ।

त्रेनियोगात्तरक्षासु भरणे च स ईश्वरः ।

So far as this law might serve as a protection against those dangers and difficulties to which constitutional imbecility might expose them, no strictures could be made against the enactment. It is neither unnatural nor unreasonable that females should always have a guardian and a protector. But from the spirit which pervades the Shasters, we may safely infer that the enactment was designed, like the others, to enchain their minds, and perpetuate their servitude.

Notwithstanding the stringent rules just mentioned, the Hindu legislators were not so totally devoid of humanity as not to condemn what they considered unnecessary severities to helpless females. They had sufficient gallantry to demand a tender regard for the feelings of the weaker sex. The language of law speaks of women as if they were mere children, and while it arms the husband with almost plenary powers over the wife, holds him responsible for any feeling of distress which may become her

तत् सपिण्डेषु चासत्सु पितृपक्षः प्रभुः स्त्रियाः ।

पक्षद्वयावसाने तु राजा भर्ता स्त्रिया मतः ॥

“ On the death of the husband, without issue, his relations have the dominion over his widow, having all authority to controul her gifts, and to maintain her person. If the husband's relations be dead, then the widow must be subject to her paternal kindred ; and if both her husband's and father's relations be defunct, then she is to depend upon the reigning government.”—*Nārada*.

portion (s). The Hindus may in this respect be called a chivalrous race. The epithet of *avala*, (powerless) applied to females, excites the strongest sentiments of compassion toward them; and, though paradoxical, it is nevertheless true, that the very people who are so indifferent to the question of female education, and who are so jealous in guarding their Zenanas, have exhibited the utmost tenderness for the weaker sex. Such tenderness has in fact been considered by all nations as an essential part of good breeding. Savage cruelty to creatures so impotent, and so nearly allied, has been every where stigmatized as base and unmanly. The native of Hindustan has not been destitute of this characteristic of refined manners. His treatment of females may not have been throughout consistent; but if he has irrationalized her by denying opportunities of intellectual cultivation, he has rendered the yoke of

(१) यत्र नायत्रस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।

यत्रैतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तत्राफलाः क्रियाः ॥

श्लोचन्ति जामयो यत्र विनश्यत्प्राणु तत्कुलं ।

न श्लोचन्ति तु यत्रैता वर्द्धन्ते तद्धि सर्वदा ॥

“Where females are honoured, there the deities are pleased; but where they are dishonoured, there all religious acts become fruitless. Where female relations are made miserable, the family of him who makes them so, very soon wholly perishes, but where they are not unhappy, the family always increases.”—*Menu* iii. 56, 57.

ignorance easy by conciliating her feelings and showing attachment and love. But the institution of Kulinism in Bengal has served to render the condition of a Hindu female as unhappy as it is degraded. To be a Kulin's daughter is generally considered a severe misfortune. Conjugal felicity there can be none where the husband continues to multiply his wives without any regard to their feelings, or any intention of maintaining them from his own resources.

After the statements just made, the present condition of Bengali females will not require a lengthened detail. The actual state of things is such as might be expected from the influence of the institutions already adverted to. However cared for by their guardians and protectors, they drag on lives, which those who can appreciate intellectual superiority, cannot help considering wretched and degraded ; they pass their days as ministers of pleasure, rather than companions or counsellors to their husbands. It is a notorious fact, that the Hindu never stops to consider the prosperity or adversity of his circumstances, when he forms an intention of marrying. He does not apprehend that his wife will be a source of additional expence ; he hopes on the contrary she will prove a most effectual instrument of saving him money and trouble. She indeed becomes a servant, if not a slave, that performs all his household business ; and although his marriage imposes upon him the maintenance of another soul, yet

the bargain is not for all that the less cheap ; he thereby has the command of an additional servant without giving pecuniary wages. There is no such thing as an unmarried person in all Bengal ; the only exceptions are those who have formally adopted an ascetic life.

The state of a Hindu woman's maiden life is perhaps the most free from trouble and anxiety. In the tender caresses of her parents, and in her exemption from the task of reading and writing, to which her brothers are unwillingly yoked, her happiness continues uninterrupted and unalloyed. She is lulled in the indolent inactivity which is then her portion ; she has no tasks to perform, no lessons to get up ; and her little mind is incapable of thinking of the future. She reposes in ignorance and quietude ; and amidst expressions of affection from indulgent parents, she continues in happy ignorance of the bitter cup that may await her riper years. The only evil which is sometimes presented to her fears, and which she is led to deprecate by means of puerile and vulgar ceremonies, is the misfortune of having copartners to share a husband's affections. Nothing is more dreaded as likely to poison her happiness for life, than her husband's polygamy ; supplications are therefore made to the Deity by means of rites, as degrading as they are superstitious, that it may not be her lot to be yoked with a husband of more than one wife.

Infancy too is the only stage in which she is privileged to see any thing of the world around

her. The sentence of imprisonment in the *Zenana* is seldom passed upon her before her marriage, and remains generally unexecuted until she attains to the age of 10 or 12. Previous to her wedding, no restraints are put upon her liberty; this indulgence betokens the regard which the Hindus in common with other nations entertain for that innocency, whereof childhood is a most gratifying emblem. Male and female children are equally at liberty to appear in public; it is not until the latter are settled in life that they are forbidden to enter into the outer courts of their houses. Under the roof of their parents they enjoy considerable freedom even after their marriage; for as long as they do not actually grow up to maturity, it is not indelicate in them to trespass beyond the boundaries of the *Zenana* in their parental dwelling. But this privilege cannot be enjoyed in the houses of their husbands, where they must never step out of the recesses of the *Zenana*, nor ever unveil their faces before any but the female and junior members of the household.

Childhood is also the time when the greatest attention is paid to them. Infant virgins of Brahminical extraction are considered as divine incarnations, and accordingly worshipped upon various occasions as goddesses. At the celebration of the *Doorga Poojah*, in particular, female children of the sacerdotal order are in great request. Religious homage is paid to them, accompanied with pecuniary gifts, food, and

wearing apparel. The wealthier Brahmins, however, consider it a derogation from their dignity to send out their children on this traffic; the poorer priests gladly avail themselves of this extraordinary source of gain.

The happiness of maiden life is, however, of very short duration with our females. Often at the age of eight, sometimes when much younger, they are dealt away in marriage. Their parents are guided in the selection of sons-in-law, not so much by their personal qualifications, as by their rank in the Tables of Kulinism. One of the later kings of the Sen family, the last Hindu dynasty that swayed the sceptre in Bengal, had instituted an hereditary order of titled noblemen, whose alliance by marriage has since been most eagerly sought by all ranks of Hindus. Although these miserable aristocrats have at present degenerated in most instances to a wretched and beggarly clan of marriage-dealers, without wealth, talent, or personal qualifications to recommend them, yet the anxiety with which their connection is sought, is a painful proof of the popular veneration for long-cherished customs. The greater majority of the Kulins pursue no occupation in life, but feed idly upon the relations of their wives. So high is their alliance held in the estimation of the people, that not only are large sums of money presented to them at the time of their marriage, but they are also often maintained with their wives for life; and not unfrequently are lands and houses settled

upon them by their fathers-in-law. These marriage-dealers have so little regard for their family, and are so strangely wanting in natural affection, that they multiply their wives almost to an unlimited extent, (t) if offers of money are made. The unfortunate creatures that are yoked with them reside under their father's roof almost as if they were actual widows. Their husbands seldom live with them; they spend their time in passing from one father-in-law's house to another; and are continually contemplating fresh bargains of marriage. The poor women are scarcely able to see their partners, and are obliged to live as it were in a state of widowhood.(u)

(t) The author knows personally individuals that have married twenty wives, without possessing any means, or pursuing any employment, whereby to sustain their own lives, much less to afford a decent maintenance to their wives. It is not uncommon for sons of Kulins to profess perfect ignorance of the number of their *half*-brothers and *step*-mothers. Their fathers multiply wives, even after passing the age of 60 or 70, and they do not always succeed in making a correct census of the increasing number of their mothers.

(u) A Bengali newspaper lately reported a strange story. The daughter of an inhabitant of Jessore was married to a Kulin, who had not visited the family for a long time. An impostor made his appearance one evening, introducing himself as the husband of the damsel. The inmates of the house had not seen the real husband for many years; and the impostor played his part so artfully that every one was deceived. The parents of the girl were far too glad on the advent of their supposed son-in-law

The number of Kulins is, however, not very large, and in consequence of an intricate point in the system, it is rapidly declining. One of the fundamental laws of this order is, that no Kulin should form an alliance with an inferior family. Where such an undignified marriage takes place, the Kulinhood is pronounced to be dissolved; and, although the perpetrator of such a marriage enjoys his own title for life, his children are degraded in their dignity, and reckoned as *second-grade* Kulins. Every succeeding race, after such a dissolution, loses one step in rank, and the fourth and fifth generations degenerate almost entirely to the state of *untitled commoners*. And as the largest bribes are offered when an unprivileged family seeks the alliance of pure Kulins, many a first-grade worthy has been unable to withstand the temptation, and has sacrificed the dignity of his descendants for the sake of enriching himself. The body of pure, or even of second and third grade Kulins, has therefore considerably diminished. Every generation reduces the numerical strength of the order, and there can be no possible hope of a fresh number being created to recruit the exhausted clan. Neither is the respect that is paid to them now, any thing like what it was

to question the veracity of their guest. They gave him a hearty welcome, and introduced him to their daughter's quarters, where the impostor slept for the night; but before break of day the next morning he decamped, carrying with himself the jewels which he had stolen from the unhappy girl's person.

before ; and these causes have happily contributed to reduce the number of female sacrifices at the shrine of Kulinhood.

After her marriage, the young bride is allowed to reside under her father's roof until she attains to the age of puberty, and then she is consigned to perpetual incarceration in her husband's Zenana, there to minister to his pleasures and perform the drudgery of a menial. Except in families which are noted for opulence, the wife is charged with the task of performing, helped or unhelped, all the work of the household,—from the sweeping and cleansing of the rooms, to the preparing and serving out the meals.

In consequence of several ramifications of the same stock continuing to reside in the same house, under the controul it may be of an aged father, who exercises a sort of patriarchal authority over them, the young wife has to pass her days generally with many females of various ages and ranks in the family. She is seldom ushered into her husband's dwelling without being greeted by several sisters-in-law, with whom she vies to secure the good-will of the aged mother-in-law. But it happens, not unfrequently, in cases where her own daughters reside in the family, that the old lady sets her face against all her sons' wives, and by an undue partiality to her own daughters, sows the seeds of jealousy and contention. The young girls, without any principles to fortify their minds, or knowledge to rectify their taste, are apt for

the most trivial reasons to take umbrage against one another ; and then the most trifling causes may inflame their antipathy into contention and disquietude. Often does the Zenana thus become, during the absence of the men, a scene of disagreement, jealousy, and quarrel.

The quickness with which these disagreements are compromised, and the alternate repetition that takes place of war and truce, are indeed very surprising. The Hindu female's mind appears to be too contracted to harbour, for a length of time, even jealousy and grudge ; quarrels are made up with the same speed with which they are fomented.

If the several brothers in the family be not all equally well off in the world, and especially if the junior members succeed better than the seniors, much jealousy prevails among their respective wives. It is a great humiliation to a Hindu woman to reflect upon her husband's ill-success, and the humiliation soon degenerates into envy ; while the wife of the more successful brother is strongly disposed to treat her sisters with scorn, and to provoke their ill-will by over-imperious demeanor.

The utter prostration of the intellect in creatures that were never led to learn letters, nor ever allowed to see or hear of the world, may be easily conceived. The highest ambition of the Bengal female, in the days of her youth, is to please her superiors, by discharging duties of the kitchen to their satisfaction, and by

neatly performing the other tasks allotted to her care ; and few things serve to gratify her more, as pledges of her husband's love, than gifts of jewels and ornaments. Though made in a clumsy manner, and kept still more carelessly, these are often manufactured with the most costly materials, such as gold, silver, diamonds, pearls, and stones. For young women to carry about their persons golden ornaments to the value of seven or eight hundred Rupees is no way uncommon. These are estimated highly, both for their intrinsic pecuniary worth, and for their being regarded as marks of love and affection ; and in visiting (under a purdah of course) and receiving visits, the sentimental ladies never forget to deck themselves with their gaudy trappings.

Their minds are scarcely ever exercised on any subjects, unconnected with their immediate and most obvious interests. Bereft of the advantages of reading and observation, their thoughts seldom extend beyond the walls of the Zenana, or soar above the roof under which they are secured ; the little exchequer of their minds contains almost nothing besides images of jewellery and household articles. Intellectual amusements and recreations are wholly unknown to them ; the only employments of which they are capable during moments of leisure, are preparations of pickles and confectionery—if sleeping or quarrelling can be avoided.

Nor are their moral faculties at all more ennobled than their intellects. The only virtue that adorns the

sex in their estimation is continence, and this, to their honour be it recorded, they preserve inviolate, no less from a sense of duty, than from the absence of temptation. Cases of conjugal infidelity very seldom occur in respectable Hindu families; but their ethical category contains scarcely any other principles of virtue and rectitude. They live in a state of moral insensibility, and do not consider themselves bound, as rational and responsible agents, to perform any thing besides their assigned work in the house. The standard of honour and moral excellence is not very high even among the men; the degradation of the women may hence be easily conceived.

The religious sense of a young Bengali woman is just what might be expected from an uncultivated mind trained under the influence of superstition and prejudice. It is ill-regulated and confused. The idea of propitiating the Deity in any way, seldom enters into her unthinking mind. Occasional supplications to the gods, in order to be able to bear children, and invocations of their protection upon her little ones, when she has brought forth any, together with a few other ceremonies of the most puerile kind, which vary in form in different families, according to diversity of taste and sentiment, are the only duties which her liturgy prescribes.

After she attains to full grown age and has become a mother of children, and perhaps the sole manager of the family, the freakish predilection of her youthful

days for vain gewgaws is rectified by her better experience; her life now settles down in a more fixed way, either for happiness or misery. If her husband prosper in the world, and exhibit proofs of attachment to her, and if no other co-partner shares his affections, her household labours become a pleasure; she cheerfully performs the duties which devolve upon her. A great portion of her anxiety is at this time directed toward her children, whose health and long life she seeks to ensure by human and divine means. The affection which she displays towards them is, in its simplicity, a most pleasing proof of the principle of parental attachment, with which Providence has endowed human nature. Her bowels literally yearn upon her children; the troubles she cheerfully undertakes on their account, and the mortifying and self-denying austerities she inflicts upon herself, in order to deprecate the wrath of the gods against them, are striking evidences of that maternal solicitude, which nature has implanted for the preservation of the animal creation. Hindu mothers are distinguished by a tenderness seldom exemplified in any other country.

The Hindu mother is however incapable of conferring upon her children, the blessings of education; she never dreams of training them up "in the way they should go." As to exercising a salutary discipline upon them, her *own* ideas of moral responsibility being vague, she expresses no solicitude about *their* being governed by principles; and since the Hindu society

is notoriously lax in its moral discipline, she cares little about the moral formation of their minds.

Nor are the children only passively suffered to grow wild in a moral and intellectual point of view; they are actually taught things, which their tutors would afterwards have them unlearn. She scruples not to avail herself of false promises and threats in her management of them, and is not very cautious in avoiding the use of indecorous and improper expressions in their hearing. The docility of their tender minds, combined with the depraved inclinations of human nature, thus leads them to imbibe the most hurtful principles, and to contract the most vitiated habits.

The afflictions with which providence may visit her in this stage of life, by the untimely removal of children, prove a sad interruption to her pleasures. Bereft of the hopes with which true religion inspires its votaries, and a stranger to the consolations which an enlightened faith in the promises of God administers, the Hindu mother's heart receives an almost insufferable blow on the loss of her children. No salve of which her friends are possessed, can heal her wounded feelings; and the malady becomes past remedy when she is deprived of an only son, the hope of her family. Her grief may be moderated for a season, and the disease remain dormant for a time; but the cycle of festive solemnities and of occasions of rejoicing constantly brings her departed child to remembrance, and

rankles the mortifying sore of her heart. Hinduism, in fact, cannot cherish any hope of re-union after death ; it inculcates indeed the reality of a future life, but the doctrine of transmigration prevents its votaries from ever expecting to see their departed friends in a different scene of existence. Before the surviving relation is called away from this troublesome earth, the deceased will perhaps have passed into another form, and returned into the world ; the living and the dead may thus cross one another without being seen or recognized. It is consequently difficult for the Hindu to calculate on a restoration, in any state of life, of his departed objects of affection ; and the fragile heart of an ignorant woman, without any higher hopes to animate it, may very naturally sink under the weight of affliction.

When the husband does not prosper well in the world, or cares little for his wife, or if he has espoused more than one partner, the matron's life becomes very miserable. Incapable of enjoying any but those pleasures and comforts which the senses can communicate, her existence becomes a scene of unmixed suffering and pain, when the hard hand of poverty, and the still harder stroke of a husband's unkindness, press heavy upon her. Life itself becomes, under such circumstances, a burden to her afflicted mind. To be subjected to the torments of a bleeding heart, without hope of deliverance here or hereafter, is a most frightful idea ; and yet this is precisely the case with a considerable

- body of Hindu women, who are treated unkindly by their husbands, and have no prospect of peace, either in this world or that which is to come.

The life of a Hindu widow is still more wretched. If she fall into this condition when young, without any property settled upon her by the father or the husband, she becomes a slave to the family where she resides. Although while her parents are alive she is protected to a certain extent, by their natural affection toward her, yet their death deprives her of her last refuge. The surviving relations of her husband are indeed bound by the tenets of the Shasters to maintain her as long as she lives; but, except in very rare instances, she is still subjected to great suffering and trouble. Her friends do not allow her the pittance necessary for sustaining life, without exacting hard labour from her; and they scruple not to embitter her cup of affliction, by constantly reminding her that she is a dead weight upon their purse.

The only favourable juncture wherein a widow is somewhat supported under the pressure of affliction, is, when she does not lose her husband until she is advanced in life, and has either property to depend upon, or sons to provide for her wants. Under such circumstances, a few months will perhaps reconcile her mind to her desolation; even the austerities she has to endure, will then become agreeable by habit. Religious considerations chiefly occupy her time in this last stage of life, when she is forbidden to look for the

relaxation of worldly amusements, and perhaps expects ere long, the dissolution of her mortal frame.

We have hitherto dwelt upon women, more or less, of respectable castes and families. A few observations on the lower orders will conclude this chapter. The poorer people, whom poverty forces to employ their wives and daughters in more than mere household work within doors, and whose resources would not allow the erection of quarters consecrated to female seclusion, cannot of course restrain their liberty, or secure them in enclosed premises. Women of the inferior classes accordingly enjoy greater freedom than their wealthier and more respectable sisters. This liberty, which becomes necessary to their existence, is however looked upon by their husbands themselves as an unavoidable disadvantage; and if they accidentally rise in society, they gradually immure their females after the manner of the superior classes. Nor can the freedom alluded to, be justly regarded an object of envy; for although it allows the sex to see more of the world they inhabit, yet this advantage is more than counter-balanced by the evils to which it exposes them. The danger of setting at large ignorant and uneducated women, with clothing that scarcely serves the purpose of a covering, and in the midst of a people, at best but half civilized, is more than a mere theoretic fear. It is a pleasing reflection indeed, that few of the lower classes, thus allowed to appear in public, possess personal attractions

to draw the unhallowed notice of unprincipled spectators ; exterior accomplishments in such cases subject the poor helpless parties to great personal risks.*

* A letter appeared lately in one of our Bengali newspapers containing a description of the present state of our female society, and purporting to be the composition of a native lady. The facetious editor attributed its authorship to a fair correspondent with the sole intention, perhaps, of producing a dramatic effect on his readers. The picture, whether drawn by a female pencil or not, appears however to be taken from life. We have elsewhere inserted an English translation of the remarkable epistle. See A Appendix.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE EDUCATION WHICH THE BENGAL FEMALES OUGHT TO RECEIVE, AND THE POSITION THEY OUGHT TO OCCUPY.

THE preceding account is calculated to excite the sympathy and compassion of the friends of humanity. The degradation of so many rational spirits can scarcely fail to draw a sigh from those who are familiar with happier instances of female improvement; it must especially call forth the commiseration of their more favoured sisters of the West. Common humanity must actuate those who have right ideas of female amelioration, to long for the regeneration of the daughters of India. The misery which results from the uncultivated state of their minds, as well as that which proceeds from the hardships to which the institutions of Hinduism subject them, even though their parents, husbands, and guardians be themselves the most affectionately disposed, must render them objects of compassion to all enlightened minds. The monstrous system by which the most important and sacred of all contracts—marriage—is turned into a yoke of servitude; the ill-judged

jealousy which deprives them of education, and consigns them to close imprisonment in the Zenana; the horrid(a) self-immolation that is recommended to their weak minds on the loss of their partners in life; the severe austerities imposed upon them in case of their declining to follow that murderous recommendation: all these conspire to depict the present condition of our females in the most painful colours, and to force the humane observer alternately to sigh and blush; to sigh for the existence of so much misery, to blush at the tyranny of man in originating and perpetuating such institutions.

A question naturally presents itself under such circumstances. Whether the wretched degradation in which the women pass their days in this country is inseparable from their nature, or whether it is capable of remedy? If they were incapable of intellectual culture, or if they could not be treated with greater lenity without endangering their honour and virtue, then their degradation should be called inevitable; it would be idle in that case to speculate on a utopian scheme of education for them, or to dream of their elevation from their present position. Before those speculations are made, and these hopes entertained, it would be important to inquire; To what

(a.) The abolition of the Suttees has we are happy to say saved our Bengal females from the peril of a violent suicide. The same humane law has now been adopted in many of the native states throughout Hindustan,

pitch may the powers of their minds be raised? To what degree may their active faculties be expected to receive culture? What position ought they to occupy in society? What liberties may be safely allowed to them, and to what extent may they be invested with any responsibilities? What part ought they to take in the concerns of this world? What preparations ought they to make for a future state of existence? These are different aspects in which the general question, wherewith this paragraph commenced may be viewed, and every one of which is entitled to serious consideration.

To answer this question in its various ramifications is our subject for consideration in this part of the essay; and that we may enter into it with as little declamation, and as much conciseness and perspicuity as the nature of the subject will allow, we shall begin with inquiring into the intentions of Divine Providence with reference to the female sex. Few persons will dispute the truth of the maxim, that the interests of a creature are then best provided for, when the purposes for which it was created are most closely kept in view, and the faculties with which it was endowed, rightly cultivated. Man, for instance, has been supplied with the power of knowing and following the will of his Maker; he is impressed with a sense of personal responsibility and animated with hopes of immortality; and he then best promotes his happiness when he

improves, with the greatest diligence, his intellectual and moral faculties, and ensures, as a spiritual and responsible agent, the eternal salvation of his soul by obedience to the precepts of Divine truth; while in proportion as he neglects these duties, he destroys and mars his own interests. But it is conceivable that the lower animals, who are not gifted with moral sense, may ever remain ignorant of their Maker's will and of the discoveries of human science without suffering any loss or inconvenience. An inquiry into the designs of the Creator in the creation of woman will, therefore, prepare us for answering the question which forms the second division of this essay.

We fear we are incurring the danger of appearing prosy to European readers. The propositions here attempted to be proved are by them considered self-evident and axiomatic; we are accordingly afraid of being considered verbose, in labouring to demonstrate truths with which they have been familiar from their infancy. But the local circumstances of the country and the prejudices of our neighbours will prove a sufficient apology. What the European will concede as first principles on the subject, requiring no investigation or proof, the Brahmin may call into controversy without scruple or hesitation; and as this essay is addressed no less to the latter, than to the former, it is impossible to avoid many inquiries which the inhabitants of Christendom have long outgrown.

The superior examples of female intelligence and female usefulness with which history and observation furnish us, may be considered as practical comments on the Divine will in this respect. Our intercourse with Europeans sojourning in the East, has presented to our notice a spectacle of female improvement which throws into the shade all our traditional recollections, whether of Lilavati, of Maitreyi, or any other of our instructed females. Not only do we find every female in the higher classes of society furnished with a superior degree of liberal education, and honourably discharging the duties of the conjugal and maternal life ; but we also see her engaged, as a member of society, in performing acts of benevolence and of public utility, and thereby exhibiting a strength of principle, and vigour of mind, that would strike our Menus and Yagna-walkyas with wonder and amazement. The ladies of Europe have been known to cultivate literature and science of all kinds ; history has presented to our admiration characters of female scholars and female philosophers of no ordinary stamp.

To cite examples of female intelligence and virtue would appear tedious to those who are conversant with European history. Every school boy in Calcutta has learnt enough to understand, that the ladies of the West have for centuries exhibited instances of learning and erudition, calculated to inspire wonder and admiration ; and to particularize individuals, might appear

invidious to the integral body of our occidental sisters.

Nor is the general body of our countrymen likely to dispute this fact. They have seen and heard sufficiently to believe that efforts at female education have been successfully made in the case of every European lady ; and that no female that has any position in society is altogether uneducated.

Now we contend that what has been done in Europe may be properly attempted in India. If all men are derived from the same original stock, the female mind must be as capable of improvement in the East as it is in the West. A difference in colour and climate could not have produced a total disparity in mental constitution.

Apart from the lessons of history and observation, our own reason may instruct us on the subject. Did we know of no instance in which females had cultivated their intellectual faculties with advantage, we might still fairly conclude that such culture was perfectly feasible. In the common affairs of life we find them exhibiting those natural faculties which constitute the character of intelligent creatures and moral agents. They are capable of all those functions which philosophers attribute to the human mind. They can perceive and attend, conceive and imagine, abstract and remember, discover causes from effects, and deduce effects from causes. They can analyze and reason,

draw conclusions from premises, and understand the force of an argument when plainly and clearly stated. They can comprehend the general nature of duty, and are subject to remorse of conscience when they err from the right path. They are aware of right and wrong, and are gifted with moral discernment in common with their husbands and brothers. Their hearts are capable of passions and affections. The sentiments of love and hatred, admiration and approbation, censure and condemnation, have not been withheld from them. Whence have they derived these capacities for thought, feeling, and action, but from the favourable designs of Providence, with reference to their education and exaltation in society? What other object can we suppose the Creator to have kept in view, when he invested them with those powers, than that they should improve them by exercise, and maintain their station as rational creatures and agents?

But we need not grope in the imperfect light of reason. We have a far more unerring instructor than Nature to teach us the designs of God in the formation of woman. The volume of Divine inspiration which has been vouchsafed to us, has enlightened us on the subject of our inquiry. The Bible, whose divine original has been acknowledged by the mightiest intellects in the most civilized countries in the world, and to the inspiration of which history as well as its internal contents bears incontrovertible

evidence, tells us not only the occasion on which, and the way in which, but also the reason for which, womankind was first created. "But for Adam there was not found an help meet for him, and the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord had taken from man, made he a woman, and he brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis ii, 20—23.) This short account sufficiently explains the Divine intentions; the woman was designed to become an help meet for man. She was to be his counsellor and companion, to assist him in his duties on earth, to sympathize with him in his sorrows, to solace him in his affliction, to cheer him when he was downcast, to bear a portion of his troubles and anxieties, to join him in his devotions, to discharge such work for him as he could not personally inspect, to nourish and cherish and instruct his infant children, in a word—to help him in every situation. And as the discharge of such important functions must pre-suppose mental and spiritual illumination, it must have been intended that the woman should prepare herself for the proper understanding and performance of her duties, by receiving the benefits of a liberal and well-directed education.

Again, since the man also had duties no less important to perform to the woman, it was undoubtedly the design of Providence that, as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, she should be allowed a reasonable portion of the personal liberty and freedom of thought and action, which Adam claimed for himself. We cannot accordingly suppose that she was designed to be secured in an inclosed Zenana, or compelled to accept of an unknown husband. We cannot suppose that she was destined in the intentions of Providence to bear the yoke of a slave in her husband's house, or to minister to his pleasures like the irrational inhabitants of a menagerie. She was to be respected, loved, and honoured, and generally treated, as the weaker vessel indeed, but for this very reason with the greater regard and affection; that her fragile heart and tender feelings might not be bruised by harsh provocation, or insulting misrule.

And what was the case with the first woman must also be the same with all her daughters, so far as the intentions of Providence are concerned: there is no reason for making an unhappy exception to the prejudice of our Bengal females. We may therefore fearlessly assert, what all sincere inquirers will perhaps candidly concede, that our sisters were designed to become help-mates to their husbands, and to enjoy the liberty of contemplating the works of Nature, instead of being doomed to a close imprisonment.

The question with which we commenced this essay, may accordingly be answered in a few words. The degradation of Hindu females is not necessary to their existence, nor is it incapable of remedy. The objects for which woman-kind was created must be as feasible in Bengal as it is in any other country. Our females ought to be what the first mother of the human species undoubtedly was, and what Providence intended all her daughters to be—help-mates to their husbands ; bone of their bones, and flesh of their flesh. They are not to remain unconcerned in the affairs of the family, nor only to bear the drudgery of the household, but on the contrary to advise and counsel their consorts to the utmost of their power. They are to assist them in the discharge of household duties, and render the evils of this mortal life less onerous by their sympathy and exhilarating company. In their affectionate caresses and rational discourses their husbands are to find a cordial, that will allay the troubles and anxieties incident to earthly existence, and stimulate dignifying and ennobling exertions. Their company should administer a pleasure and a comfort more than compensating for the toils and fatigues of the day. Few images can be more gratifying to the fancy, than that of a discreet female vivifying the exhausted spirits around her in the domestic circle, and soothing, by her conduct and conversation, the husband that returns from the heat and burden of his diurnal occupations.

There is a charm in the rational sympathy of an intelligent wife which must operate almost with talismanic power upon the mind that is agitated and disturbed by temporal crosses and disappointments.

Weak as the female sex is, its influence on the male sex is incalculably powerful. Nothing can impart greater strength to the moral character, or call forth more forcibly the latent energies of the soul, than the sympathy of instructed wives and sisters. Wild as was the chivalry of the dark ages, one of its component elements was pregnant with the happiest results. The desire of gaining female approbation moved the knights with an irresistible impulse to acts of heroism. Its abuses may be attributed to the imperfect and defective education of the times, but the motive which that desire supplied to great efforts must have produced important effects on society. The natives of Bengal are now lamentably deficient in energy and character. It is our firm conviction that their cast of mind will be wonderfully improved, when females will learn how to exercise a salutary influence on their husbands and brothers.

Of the duties and privileges of the conjugal life, one of the holiest is that which respects communion in devotional exercises. The reflection of a husband and wife striving in unison to ensure their eternal salvation, by worshipping God according to his revealed will, and contemplating his marvellous works of nature and

grace, with one heart and one mind, has a captivating power over the imagination, which it overwhelms with joy and delight. Thrice happy they in whose case such an idea is realized. It is thus that "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband." The husband and the wife are mutually bound, or rather privileged, to edify one another's heart by consentient attention to the most important of all inquiries, that their conjugal partnership in life, may be followed by that everlasting communion in glory, which ought to engross the meditation and contemplation of all immortal spirits.

As mothers, our females ought to train the young minds of their children in habits of piety, virtue, and good sense. The professional avocations of the father generally requiring his absence from home throughout the greatest part of the day, the child's infancy must be trusted principally to the care of the mother; the early cultivation of its intellectual soil must mainly depend upon her prudent management. Its moral improvement must be promoted by her wholesome discipline, as much as its physical growth by the sustenance she provides. The infant ought to imbibe salutary principles from the instruction and conversation of her enlightened understanding, while it extracts material nourishment from the milk that she supplies. If the support of its animal life were the only duty which devolved upon her, there would scarcely be any

distinction between our sisters and the irrational creatures, who have been endowed in like manner with an instinctive disposition to toil for the preservation of their young ones. But the human species owes higher obligations to its offspring than the grovelling beasts of the field; the education of their minds is no less entitled to parental attention, than the nourishment of their bodies. However novel this idea of infant schooling under female management may appear to our countrymen, who have not yet experienced its blessings in themselves, it is not an unreasonable reverie of an inventive fancy. Our own judgments, if we consider the subject dispassionately, will teach us that it is perfectly feasible. It is impossible to question the propriety of maternal care for the intellectual and moral development of a child's understanding during such time as it cannot be sent to a public or private seminary. The father who has to work without the house for the maintenance of the family, will not, in most instances, have time to undertake this important duty, and unless his partner attend to its execution, it must be left wholly undone.

Nor is the idea of a mother's moral superintendence over her infants a mere speculative theory, for the first time broached in this essay, and proposed to the practical consideration of the Hindus. Any one who is familiar with European history, and has considered its lessons with tolerable attention, must attribute the

illustrious superiority of many a conspicuous character to the influence of female parents, exerted over their tender minds. It was in the cradle, under the judicious management of intelligent and pious mothers, that the first seeds of education were sown in numberless persons, who afterwards bore prominent parts in the literary, scientific, and religious worlds. How many eminent men, that have proved ornaments to society, have thankfully ascribed the early growth of the principles by which they profited in life, to the advantages of maternal discipline reaped in their infancy. The attentive reader of biography may easily perceive that the elements of intellectual superiority, by which numbers have reflected lustre on the human species, were first implanted in their mother's lap, and were for a considerable period cherished by her instruction and advice.

Our best friends have complained that our educated countrymen themselves begin at an early age to lose their mental brightness; that their intellects shine like the *ignis fatuus* for a limited period after which they degenerate. The complaint is certainly borne out by facts; but it is not the climate or any peculiarity in our constitution to which the degeneracy is to be attributed. Such an inference would at least be premature, before the effects of female emancipation on the national character have been fairly tried. Education has as yet had a small sphere for its work; its

influence has extended only to a mere moiety of the population, even where it has been most widely disseminated. Mothers, wives, and sisters are still as ignorant as they ever were. The infant mind is still neglected. The mental soil of the nation is not prepared by maternal care, and we cannot wonder if the impressions produced by the school-master prove to be transient. How the case may turn out if every boy commences his academical career with a mind previously worked upon, and, after leaving school, is impelled to maintain the dignity of an educated person at home and abroad, by the influence of an instructed wife or sister, has still to be seen.

In the capacity of mistresses of the household, it is the province of women to ensure the proper transaction of all domestic affairs. They are to ascertain their husbands' wishes on points wherein they need advice, and to provide for the fulfilment of the same with diligence and activity. The menials, especially of their own sex, demand particularly their direction and care. They are the most suitable agents for exercising a salutary discipline over these members of the family, and for performing acts of kindness and benevolence to them. They are charged with the whole executive power in the household, while their partners are drawn out of doors by their public employments. The wife is, in fact, the governor of the house, the husband being prevented by his more arduous engagements, from entering into the details of domestic economy.

As members of society, our females ought to shed a humanizing influence over the great body of the Hindu community. The indelicacy, and even obscenity of language, and the laxity of manners, tolerated in company by our countrymen, are calculated to disgust all observers of any moral sensibility. The education of women, and their introduction to society, will operate as a powerful check upon such licentious practices. Few are so depraved as not to shrink from offending the ears of their wives and sisters by the indecorous use of a corrupt and corrupting vocabulary ; the presence of the sex must therefore prove an effectual barrier against the vicious stream that now flows with violence unbated. The freedom with which the most celebrated authors of the Sanscrit literature have represented, without a blush, the vilest and the most abominable thoughts and images, under the imposing garb of *poetry*, could never be tolerated or exercised, if the writers or readers had the most distant fear of their own wives and sisters perusing them, or if the community to which they belonged contained educated females, before whom such lettered obscenities could not be introduced. The remark is likewise applicable to the older Bengali literature of pure indigenous growth.(a)

(a) So little is the care which our Bengali authors have taken to avoid indelicacy of expression, that even the *Probodh Chundrika* and the *Hitopadesha*, works printed under European patronage, are not free from objections in this respect.

In the state of widowhood too, our ladies ought to be more serviceable to themselves and to society, than they can at present be. The servitude to which the death of their husbands reduces them, when they inherit no property, might be prevented in many of its unhappy consequences, if they could apply themselves to any kind of pursuit. Their misery and destitution admit under existing circumstances scarcely of any alleviation. The provisions which the wisdom of our ancient legislators had created, cannot, and do not, shield them from the unkind strokes of poverty and bondage. It would be preposterous to suppose, that the general injunctions of Hinduism would be able to help their unhappiness, while they were unable to assert their claims, and were consigned to the mercy of their husbands' surviving kinsmen. So long as they continue incapable of being serviceable to any body, and subsist as idlers on the charity of others, the precepts of Menu and Nárada will be lost equally on the government and on their relations. They ought to return some kind of respectable and decent service to the quarter whence they are to draw their sustenance. Society may derive benefits in various ways from intelligent and well-disposed widows, and will cheerfully undergo the burden of their maintenance, when it reaps the fruits of their exertions.

Besides these various objects, claiming the attention of our females in the various relations of life, they

have to secure the salvation of their souls. They contain within their corporal frames, spirits no less immortal and capable of eternal blessedness, than those of their husbands and brothers. The sacred obligations of true religion are of equal force upon them. They are naturally "dead in trespasses and sins," in common with the other sex ; and the provisions of revealed religion are alike adapted to their spiritual wants. They must therefore exercise their minds upon the covenant and law of God, as He has been pleased to promulgate them, and study to ensure their title to the blessings, which faith in his promises and submission to his will are calculated to secure.

The proper discharge of these offices requires however that their minds should in the first place be cultivated. While the intellect continues uninformed, and the heart unsanctified, no human being is fitted for the right performance of any duties, domestic or public, personal or social ; a woman must especially come short in these respects, so long as she is restricted from participating the advantages of education. She cannot be safely placed in the position to which she is entitled, if her passions be not regulated by principle, and if the vagrancies to which she is naturally inclined, be not rectified by an enlightend conscience. No accomplishments can possibly supply her want of discretion and spiritual discernment. It is not a fair, but

a virtuous woman, whose illumined and expanded intellect enables her to understand, and whose affections, sanctified by the holiest influences of religious truth, actuate her to discharge her duties, that becomes a crown to her husband, a blessing to her children, and an acquisition to society. But what conceivable benefits can proceed from an illiterate woman? What counsel can she tender to her husband, but such as is calculated only to thwart and embarrass? What help in the cause of domestic happiness can be expected from a person, who is distinguished from the grovelling creatures of the earth, only by the peculiarity of her physical form? What sanctifying influence can be exercised on the tender heart of an infant by an uneducated mother, whose example and precepts can only increase its natural propensity to evil? What instructions can she impart to its docile mind, which it ought not to unlearn? What impulse can she communicate to its passions and affections, but in the low, grovelling, and vicious channels of sin, depravity, and ignorance?

What discipline can be exerted over a household by a mistress capable only of fomenting disturbances, and occasioning vexation? What moral blessings may servants derive from a governess, who needs personally as much instruction as themselves? How can a creature, over whose mind hover the thick clouds of ignorance and vice, guide her menials in the path of

righteousness, or help them to improve their intellectual condition.

What service, but of the most degraded sort, can be looked for from a set of widows incapable of any avocations which require thought and energy? What profit can society derive from creatures unenlightened, and without principle, and totally destitute of intellectual activity? What return can the human community receive from such useless and unthinking persons, that it may contribute to their comfortable subsistence, without regarding them as objects of charity?

What humanizing influence can be exerted upon society by a despised body of uneducated females, fitted only for being immured, and liable to abuse any indulgence that may be allowed to them? (b) How can illiterate creatures, scarcely raised above the level of the irrational animals, claim that respect, or occupy that

(b) Menu considers liberty allowed to females as a dangerous indulgence; and classes it in the same category with other incentives to crime.

पानं दुर्जन संसर्गः पत्या च विरहोऽटमं ।

स्वप्नोऽन्यगेहवासश्च नारीसंश्लेषनिषट् ॥

“The following six lead to crime and impurity in women—viz. drinking, keeping company with bad men, quarrelling with their own husbands, *wandering at large*, sleeping at unseasonable hours, and lodging at a stranger's house.”—Institutes ix. 18.

Much sagacity is displayed in this remark; it was certainly well applicable to the state of society in which Menu lived.

position, by which alone they may soften the ferocity, chasten the taste, and promote the civilization of the united body of their husbands, relations, and countrymen? Females are generally so weak and so sensitive that unless they live under the direction of strict principles, and the influence of holy motives, they are apt to render a *wide house* more uncomfortable than *the corner of the house top*. While the greatest portion of the happiness which pervades a domestic circle, proceeds chiefly from the judicious management, and the decorous demeanor of an enlightened wife, the misery and unhappiness caused by a brawling and vicious woman are nevertheless bitter in the extreme. She forgets her proper position, and would compel her husband to adopt the reveries of her own fancy; and thus retards, instead of facilitating, his performance of duty. Phantoms of a freakish imagination are regarded as realities; and a vicious, irregular, and mischievous whim usurps the authority, and claims the obedience, due only to reason, judgment, and rectified taste. And as to the exercise of a salutary influence upon society, the idea itself is preposterous. An uneducated female whose honour demands a restraint upon her liberty, and renders seclusion necessary, is commonly enrolled in the list of her husband's untransferable moveables, and neither possesses the ability, nor can command the respect by which alone she might correct the laxity, and moralize the tone of her relations and friends.

It is accordingly necessary that the female mind should be improved; that it should be regulated by right principles, and enlarged by useful learning; that it should be brought up in the nurture and admonition of God, so as to be under the government of sanctified feelings and affections; and that its religious impressions should be deepened by rational conviction and internal assurance.

The honour and aggrandizement of our country imperatively demand the intellectual and moral improvement of her daughters. India can never rise, while mental degradation unfits them for the attention and respect naturally due to them, and renders their introduction to, and elevation in society, equally impracticable and undesirable. A regard for their virtue and for our own happiness may at present force their husbands to restrain their liberty, and to check their presumption. But it is equally discreditable and cruel wilfully to perpetuate their bondage and mental inactivity, by obstructing the development of their faculties, and denying to them the advantages of education. The cultivation of their mental powers is an obligation which nature and kindred have imposed upon us, and an intentional, deliberate, and habitual neglect to discharge it, will render our situation fearfully responsible in the sight of God.

But if our hearts be too obdurate to be affected by a principle of duty, let a sense of interest at least move

us. The instruction of females will prove a blessing not only to themselves, but also to ourselves, our children, and our country. The advantages accruing to husbands from the counsel and sympathy of intelligent wives; to children, from the instruction and advice of pious and judicious mothers; and to society, from the humanizing influence of respected and sensible women, have already been considered; we shall reap for ourselves, individually and collectively, no inconsiderable a portion of the benefits which will result from the emancipation of our females.

We may then exhibit before the world that the Bengali society is capable of as much elevation as any other on the face of the globe; that our climate is not a necessary obstacle to the development of our minds. Some eminent historians have doubted the possibility of regenerating those races which have once become degenerated. Whether this remark be sufficiently borne out by experience or not, it needs not damp our energies. The Bengali is a rising, not a degenerated nation. Its mental capacities have been proved to be equal to those of any other people, and though still marked by numerous deficiencies, it may yet rise to the highest possible pitch of civilization and refinement. The education of its females may bring on a new and happy era in its history.

As to the rules by which this education should be regulated, or the mode in which it is to be conducted,

the limits of this essay will scarcely admit of a detailed statement. What moralists have often asserted on the subject of female education in general, might be repeated here with reference to the education of native females in particular; but lucubrations on a trite subject may be properly dispensed with in an attempt, whereof the theme is so peculiarly local. Suffice it to say, that we would give their minds all the polish of which they are capable. We would put no restraints on the cultivation of their intellects. We would not interdict any branch of knowledge calculated to improve the understanding. There is no reason why the education of girls should be less liberal than that of boys. But we would wish their instruction to be compatible with the natural delicacy of their sex and with their peculiar position in society.(c)

(c.) An enlightened friend and countryman, familiar with the idea of female instruction in his own family, suggests the propriety of sketching the kind of education we would recommend to our countrywomen. His letter we have printed by permission in the Appendix.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE MEANS WHEREBY THE AMELIORATION OF BENGAL FEMALES MAY' BE EFFECTED UNDER EX- ISTING CIRCUMSTANCES.

WE have now described the evils by which our female society is afflicted, and endeavoured to show that they are not incapable of remedy. But the most difficult part of our duty remains yet unperformed. The physician that cuts a sore and pronounces it to be curable, must apply the remedy before he can expect his discharge. The means by which the present condition of our females may be improved so as to allow their elevation to their proper position, are now to be delineated. The measures by the practical operation of which the women of Bengal may be raised to the post which Divine Providence has designed for their occupation, must now be considered. The steps by which they may ascend to an equality with the ladies of Europe, remain still to be traced.

In this department of our essay, we labour under singular disadvantages. In the first chapter, we had only to frame a digest of our ancient institutions,

and to generalize actual facts around us ; and on the subject of our second division, some light was thrown by the improvement which western females had already made, and which consequently served as a standard, whereby to estimate the capacities of the sex. But under this third head, we are left entirely to our own anticipations and deductions. We have here to tread a path not yet beaten so as to serve the purpose of a guide. This acknowledgment will sufficiently explain our desire not to be understood positively to dogmatize, but diffidently to suggest, certain ways in which the friends of female education may attempt the enlightenment of our Bengal sisters.

The question about to be discussed is,—By what practicable means may the females of Bengal be raised in an intellectual and moral point of view, and rendered competent for the discharge of their several duties with credit, and for the maintenance of their proper position with advantage to themselves and to society? We have already asserted that the cultivation of the mind by a well-directed education, must be looked to as the great engine of improvement ; and the point under consideration has principal reference to such feasible expedients, as may promote the circulation of knowledge among them. We have to inquire into the most effective plans whereby to afford them such education as is necessary for the accomplishment of the desired end.

The instilment of knowledge can be effected either by public instruction or private tuition. Boys or girls of various families may meet in a common seminary for the purpose of education, and vie with one another under the same roof and the management of the same governors ; or, if their parents prefer it, they may prosecute their studies in a more secluded way, within the enclosures of a private dwelling, and in company with their own relations and friends. Each of these modes has its uses and abuses, advantages and disadvantages. Our present inquiry does not however refer to their relative utility or expediency. We are here called upon only to investigate into the most practicable mode of introducing education among our Bengal sisters ; our object is to discover to what extent their parents and guardians may tolerate the adoption of either, or both, of these methods of disseminating instruction among them.

The practice of immuring the females, and disposing of them in early life by marriage, must baffle every attempt at conferring public education upon them. No respectable Hindu can as yet be prevailed upon to send his daughter or his wife to school, where she will perhaps become a gazing stock, and be obliged to keep company, indiscriminately, with all castes of people. Few reflections are associated with greater horror in a native's imagination, than that of a stranger's obtaining a sight of his females. No friendship, however

intimate, will easily introduce a person to the wife of his neighbour; and even in cases where the utmost confidence prevails, the husband can hardly be persuaded to tolerate her appearance before his friends. So strongly have custom and the tone of society rivetted these prejudices upon the mind, that previous to a complete moral revolution in India, the most powerful incentives to female enfranchisement will fail in their object. The obtrusion of a woman in public, especially in youthful life, is considered highly disreputable.

If, under these circumstances, a strong desire prevailed of raising the female character, we might entertain some faint hopes of witnessing a defiance of popular prejudices, and a renouncement of long-established customs, for the sake of advancing the good cause. Unfortunately, however, very little importance is practically attached to the improvement of the sex. The aggregate body of the Hindus set scarcely any value upon their attainments, and appear heedless of the advantages to be reaped from intelligent wives and daughters. They can imagine no possible way by which their acquirements may be turned to pecuniary purposes, and have little conception of any nobler ends of knowledge. No motive is accordingly found to exist, which might actuate the Hindus to confer educational benefits on their women, in open violation of the custom of secluding them.

The obstacle which fashion opposes, is also to be weighed in the balance against the public instruction of females. Their friends have not only to lament the absence of any incentives to the pursuit of knowledge, but they have actually to pull against a powerful stream flowing in the opposite direction. Although, as we have already seen, neither the theology nor the philosophy of Hinduism is directly repugnant to female education, and although many instances of intellectual superiority in the sex have been mentioned with approbation, yet the current of public opinion has long been unfavourable to the principle of educating them; a spirited protest in practice against this general sense must incur the risk of being stigmatized as uncourteous and heterodoxical. The existence of the conventional feeling against an object so excellent, may be unaccountable on any rational grounds; the fact is nevertheless unquestionable; and it is the unkindly influence of that feeling which paralyzes every effort to raise the condition of the sex. Those who have received the benefits of a liberal education may sigh for the emancipation of their sisters; but the utilitarianism of the Hindus will raise the question of *cui bono*, the moment a scheme of female education is proposed to them. Such being the adverse tone of Hindu society, its opposition to female instruction will become almost insurmountable if the question be necessarily associated

with a woman's appearance in public, which the educated natives themselves are not prepared to sanction.

The female dress too, must prove an additional inconvenience to public instruction. The one piece of thin muslin with which our country-women shroud themselves, may be tolerated within an inclosed Zenana, the solitude of which can never be disturbed by the intrusion of a stranger; but their appearance in public with such habiliments would be a breach of decency, and might lead to unhappy consequences. This inconvenience might be obviated by the adoption of more substantial garments, but if the jealous repugnance of the Bengali to the least addition or alteration in the articles of female attire be taken into account, the difficulty will appear in its true and appalling character: and however unimportant in itself, the fact is sufficiently serious when viewed in all its actual consequences.

These considerations force upon our minds the conviction that nothing can be expected at present, from the system of public schooling as far as the higher and middling classes of females are concerned. The society of the Hindus is not yet prepared for accepting the blessings which might flow from such a measure; until a complete revolution takes place in their thoughts and feelings, no reasonable hopes can be entertained of their tolerating the attendance of females in a public seminary.

We do not mean however to express a feeling of hostility to the institutions which have already been reared for the benefit of our country-women, and the most distinguished of which stands as an ornament to Cornwallis Square. It would manifest a total destitution of moral sensibility, not to recognize the zealous efforts of those whose names are associated with the very theme of our essay, and who, in the genuine spirit and with the unwearied perseverance of Christian heroines, first realized the idea of *native female education*, and exhibited their belief to the world, by their philanthropic exertions, that the women of Bengal were animated by souls as precious as those of the men. But even the patience and fortitude of the agents employed by the "Ladies' Society," could not achieve what might be called miracles; and that noble monument of their Christian exertions, the Central School, to which a native gentleman^(a) himself contributed no less than 20,000 Rs. has failed to attract within its walls any but children of the lowest classes of society. These were little restrained by the law of *fashion*, and did not scruple to send their girls out of doors. Men of no caste have in this respect shown a feeling of independence, which the high and noble dared not assert. We must not however dissemble that even the

(a) Rajah Buddinauth Roy.

lower orders do not send their children to school without other stimulants than love of knowledge. Nor has the result produced any influence on native society. Severe criticism of female acquirements would reflect little honor on the critic; and in India the day of small things must not be despised. No pecuniary outlay can be considered too great, even if it produced a single educated native female in Bengal. We doubt however whether any *Hindu* woman has in this way received an education productive of abiding consequences; whether any female, thus instructed, can compose a single sentence in English or in Bengali with grammatical correctness. Not that the honoured and industrious tutoresses are themselves to blame. Far from it. Their diligence and zeal are entitled to the reverence of all that are friendly to the cause. But where parents and guardians exercised an inclement influence at home by precept and example, the effects of a few hours' instruction at school could not be great. The usefulness of female schools has thereby been much obstructed. Not only have they met with ill success in drawing educational candidates of any respectability; but those they have collected from time to time, have principally come forward from artificial encouragements. The knowledge actually imparted has also been very limited. The early marriages of the pupils, would snatch them away from their studies before they

had learnt the simplest rudiments of their own language, and put a stop to the further cultivation of their minds. The result has been a constant fluctuation of pupils, and the actual progress elicited in the classes, has for many years been at a standing mark.

In order to do justice to the seminaries above-mentioned, we will institute a distinction between *General Education*, and the *inculcation of Christianity*. The former is the formation of the mind by a course of intellectual discipline, and requires a long and connected series of human expedients and literary studies; the latter is the sacred work of initiating in the elementary truths of the Gospel, which depends peculiarly upon the preventing grace of God, and calls more for *pastoral* admonition, than for literary scholarship. The one is, for the most part, a human operation, where human helps and human instruments are used according to human judgment; the other is an especial work of Divine grace, where means and instruments are regulated more by a reference to the voice of inspiration and the practice of the Christian Church, than by an immediate appeal to human reason and human discretion. General education is therefore to be distinguished from the more sacred work of what in the primitive ages would be called *catechizing*; and although the former may often, under God's blessing, subserve the latter, yet this occasional dependance does not annul their essential distinction.

Now in the public schools under consideration, little has been done in an educational, though much attempted in the catechizing way. The children are found scarcely to have learnt the rudiments of grammar and construction, when their early marriages, and the irresolute instability of their parents withdraw them from school. With respect, however, to Catechisms and Gospels, they have often been known to have mastered considerable portions by heart. But owing to its necessary imperfection, their literary education has hardly conferred any advantages upon them, the pupils unlearning in a few months, what they had got up in as many years.

Their initiation into Christianity too has been thwarted in most instances by the contagion of their heathen associations at home, and by their entire removal after a time from Christian influence. But as we would magnify the grace of God, and honour the instruments. He has blessed, even in one case of actual conversion, we must express our gratitude at the instances, we find reported of persons professing Christianity who had been instructed in those schools. It must nevertheless be acknowledged, that with the exception of a few individual cases, the spiritual results have not been (if we be allowed to speak from what we see and hear) much greater than the intellectual effects. The children's stay at school has generally resembled a short episode in their infancy, after which they have fallen

into the same habits as before, and grown under the same influence under which they were born.

It is only when the continued attendance of children can be secured, that public tuition may be conducted with advantage; and here we must testify to the usefulness which Orphan Asylums promise. Too much commendation cannot be passed upon those individuals and societies, which rescued many a helpless infant from pestilence and starvation, during the several visitations of famine, drought, and inundation, which the Almighty was pleased to send upon the country within the last ten years,^(b) and provided at the same time for their moral training. Such benevolent preservation of the body from the horrors of famine; followed by a corresponding attention to the welfare of the soul, is worthy the disciples of Him, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, and who, while he spread a genial repast before hungry multitudes, directed them also to the spiritual bread of life. The cause of education, no less than the interests of Christianity, must eventually be forwarded by the noble exertions of His followers in first rescuing the body and then nourishing the soul.

But for reasons already mentioned, no attempt can prove successful at present, of conferring public education upon females in the better ranks of society. For these, the only mode left for trial, is private tuition

(b) This was written in 1841.

in a well-secured house inaccessible to strangers. No other scheme is likely to command the confidence of parents. The Hindus are still unprepared to risk the reputation of their families by exposing their females. But many have grown so far superior to the prejudices of their country as to feel the propriety of educating them. They appear willing to execute their wishes if it can be done without molestation; they concede, at least in theory, that girls may be instructed, not only with impunity, but also with profit; we may therefore hope that they will not repudiate a proposal to instruct their daughters within their own doors, without the sacrifice of trouble or money on their part. Notwithstanding their practical ignorance of the blessings proceeding from the education of their women, they cannot deny that learning is at least an accomplishment, a portion of which may be safely imparted to their ladies. They do not understand this sufficiently to regret the evils resulting from the intellectual darkness in which their families are involved; but they would still be proud to own wives and daughters capable of rational amusements and recreations. They have not learnt to appreciate the abstract idea, so as to undergo pecuniary or social privations for realizing it; but they may nevertheless be expected to accept, with greater or less thankfulness, such helps as may be tendered consistently with their jealous prejudices respecting female seclusion, and with

the reduced circumstances in point of temporals, under which it is their misfortune to labour.

The custom which anciently prevailed in the Greek Churches of instructing female catechumens in their own apartments, will throw considerable light upon the subject of our inquiry. We desire to educate a number of human beings, whom we cannot invite out of doors, and upon whose public appearance we ought not to insist in the present state of their minds ; and as some of the Eastern Churches were once placed in similar circumstances with ourselves, we cannot fail to acquire much useful information from a review of this practice. The Greeks were in the days of yore as averse to, though perhaps not so jealous of the introduction of their women into society as the Hindus ; and if we inquire into the measures adopted by the friends of female improvement among the former, we may possibly derive considerable light as to the most feasible means of ameliorating the sex among the latter.

Upon the wise and charitable principle of becoming all things to all men, and in order to avoid the risk connected with an unseasonable and premature obtrusion of unenlightened women upon the public, as well as to avert the scandal associated in the estimation of unbelievers with such an ill-advised proceeding, the Church provided for the instruction of her feeble-minded daughters, without interfering with the national habits of the people. Female catechists were employed,

who visited their sex in private, and thus the light of the Gospel was carried into the Gynæceum, without provoking the opposition, or even exciting the jealousy of the community. (c) Now the analogy (d) between the manners of the ancient Greeks and the Hindus is in this respect so remarkable, and the selection of those tutoresses was regulated by such wise canons, that better

(c) “*Fæminæ per fæminas, says Grotius, primi Christianismi cognitione imbui et sic ad Ecclesias pertrahi debebunt.*” Clemens (of Alexandria) speaks more particularly; *συνδιακονες προς τας ουκῆσας γυναικας* (by which he meant the female catechists,) *ἕι ων εις την γυναικονιτια. αδιαβλητως παρεισδυετο ἡ τε κυριω διδασκαλια.* And the author of the *Apost. Const.* testifies to the same effect; *εστι γαρ ὁποταν εκ τισι οικιαις ανδρα διακονον γυναιξιν ε δυνατον πεμπειν δια τες απιστες αποστελεις εν γυναικα διακονον.*

It must be acknowledged that we are indebted for these passages to Hamon L’Estrange.

(d) The following representation by Corn. Nepos of Greek manners, as contrary to Roman, may be called an exact anti-type of Hindu customs in this respect:—“*Contra ea pleraque nostris moribus sunt decora, quæ apud illos turpia putantur. Quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in convivium? Aut cujus mater familias non primum locum tenet sædium. atque in celebritate versatur. Quod multo sit aliter in Græcis, Nam neque in convivium adhibetur, nisi propinquorum; neque sedet, nisi in interiore parte sædium, quæ gynæconitis appellatur: quo nemo accedit, nisi propinqua cognatione conjunctus.*”
— *Corn. Nepo. Prefam.*

rules cannot be conceived by which to conduct female educational agency in India. The deaconesses were aged and experienced widows, unentangled with the cares of the household, and qualified by long preparatory training for the performance of the duties which they undertook. Their intelligence and strength of principle enabled them to teach their pupils with success, and to prevent scandal ; the Church thus carried on her blessed work without unnecessarily disgusting the deep-rooted prejudices of the people, or prematurely exposing creatures, who would probably abuse their liberty, while their minds were yet weak, and therefore neither fortified by religious devotion nor notions of honour.

This venerable custom of the ancient churches is entitled to the serious attention of the friends of humanity. An association may be formed upon an extensive scale, and with every possible provision against unnecessary offence to native prejudices, and suitable tutoresses of age and experience may be entertained for the purpose of carrying the light of European knowledge into the Zenanas of the Hindus. Government may be memorialized to patronize, and the natives themselves invited to support a scheme, visibly fraught with inestimable blessings to the country, and based upon the principle of non-interference with religion. The Council of Education will probably acknowledge, that half the population of India, which exercise such

considerable influence, as mothers and wives, upon the students of their colleges and schools, are not necessarily excluded by their sex from a proper share of their attention and good wishes ; the sanction of such a body must considerably extend the operations of the corporation we are sketching, and ensure the confidence of parents and guardians. The connection of a few respectable natives would increase that confidence, and serve to stimulate their countrymen to co-operate in the good cause. A liberal allowance may induce many a foreign lady of age and experience, to devote their time and talents to the instruction of so interesting a body of their sex. A great step may be hereby taken towards the consummation of a work which has hitherto been almost entirely neglected. If a few wealthy and influential native gentlemen can also be induced to give up rooms in their inner courts for the use of private schools, where none but ladies shall be admitted as tutoresses or visitors, nor any except girls from select families allowed to enter as pupils, expectations still more sanguine may be entertained of the success of the experiment. People may not be wanting under such circumstances to send their daughters to institutions so select ; a goodly number of girls may be assembled, at least, from the circle of the landlords' own friends.

The terms on which education will be hereby offered, may from their conciliating character operate as inducements on many minds, which would otherwise

shrink from the prospect of infringing the customs of the country, or of encountering heavy demands upon their purse. The Hindu might reject with indignation a proposal that demanded the appearance of his females in public, or their instruction in Christianity ; but he may tolerate their education in general literature, if that could be offered within doors upon terms suited to their circumstances.

The Christian friend of native female education needs not question the propriety of a scheme even though it may exclude religious instruction. Religion is indeed so naturally linked with true science and sound philosophy, that a wilful separation of the one from the other, may be condemned as an act of treachery to both. But where circumstances over which he has no control reduce the Christian to the dilemma of either suffering a vast number of his fellow creatures to pine in total ignorance, or of contenting himself for a time with teaching such general elements as may gradually open their minds, he has no other alternative than that of submitting to the necessity of the case, if he wishes to take any part in the improvement of mankind.

The admission of European teachers for the education of *male* children was often allowed by the most respectable members of the native community, who considered it fashionable at one time to employ private tutors for their boys ; and if an equal degree of interest could be excited in behalf of their girls, many Baboos

would doubtless realize of their own accord the idea of female instruction in the Zenana. In one instance, at least, we know such a course was pursued with considerable success. The provisions which Baboo Prosunno Coomar Tagore had made for the education of his late much lamented daughter, were unequivocal proofs of his sense of paternal duty, as well as of his energy and public spirit; the happy effects produced by his exertions, were illustrative of the practicability of the plan we are recommending. For a Hindu gentleman of rank and fortune so far to disregard the corrupt prejudices of a bigoted community, as to engage a European tutoress for the purpose of instructing a female member of his household, was no ordinary exhibition of moral fortitude; the success which crowned his efforts, was an earnest of what might yet be expected from similar measures. It would not be chimerical to hope, that if instruction could be offered under the auspices of a well-organized European-native Society, without demanding a sudden and violent revolution in the domestic economics of the Hindus, the cause of female improvement might gradually prosper, in Calcutta at least. While alluding to the almost unique example of Baboo Prosunno Coomar, it becomes extremely melancholy to reflect, that the *first* native lady that had cultivated European letters and acquired European accomplishments, and to whose instruction large funds had been cheerfully dedicated,

by an enlightened and affectionate father, should be snatched away in the prime of life, to the deep affliction of her parents, and the sincere regret of all that have heard of her.(e)

Attempts on the part of husbands to instruct their own wives within the recesses of their houses, have also been reported to us by testimony on which we can rely. Of these, some have been crowned with partial success, others have proved total failures. All these efforts had, however, been undertaken under the most unfavourable circumstances; and therefore, while the successful cases ought to serve as encouragements, the disappointments that have been experienced, were perfectly natural. The soil had long continued fallow, the atmosphere was most ungenial, the seed had been but sparingly sown, and the exertions spent upon the work were necessarily feeble. The wonder, therefore, is, not that all the seeds did not germinate and thrive to

(e) It were exceedingly to be wished, that the literary exercises of this lady, if she left any, together with a memoir of her life, and a detailed statement of her intellectual progress, were presented to the public. Such a compilation would be deeply interesting both as a monument of her father's singular fortitude, and also as the precious remains of the first native girl that was properly educated in European literature; and its effects upon intelligent Hindus would be incalculable. Many that followed the Baboo in *professing* their regard for the females, might thereby be actuated to imitate his *example*.

maturity ; but that any, however few, produced the desired fruits. Notwithstanding the insignificance of the crop, and the poverty of the harvest, the little that has been done, is an earnest of what may yet be expected from more vigorous efforts, and better regulated plans.

If the difficulties which even husbands experience in getting access to their own wives during the day be remembered, the failures just referred to cannot excite any surprise. It is considered extremely uxorious in a person, especially when he is but a junior member in the family, often to spend his time within the female court of his house, or to seek the company of his wife before he retires to his own apartment in the night ; he cannot therefore easily get opportunities of conversing with her during the day. If a quick sense of duty actuate him to undertake her tuition, he finds it impracticable to attend to it except at an advanced hour in the night ; and since few can be competent at such a time for great intellectual exertions, the ill success we have mentioned was by no means unexpected. Where a husband could not remain in the society of his wife during the day without being marked with an opprobrious stigma, it could not be a matter of amazement or surprise if he failed in instructing her. Neither could the girl herself carry on her studies during day-light without annoyance and interruption. Besides the manual work of the household which might be allotted to her, and which

would consume the greatest portion of her time, she could not easily get off from the company of her sisters and cousins, and retire for intellectual or devotional purposes. The scheme of private tuition, under the direction and management of a well-organized association, may rectify these evils, by reclaiming many a promising student from the vicious influence of her domestic companions, and therefore promises a richer crop and a more extensive harvest.

But under the present state of things our teachers must be Europeans, since we shall not for a long time succeed in raising up such native tutoresses as might be able not only to impart instruction, but also to command, by their age and experience, the respect and reverence of those around them, that the mouth of calumny might be stopped, and no scandal thrown in so useful a course. And therefore, our expectations cannot be too ardent. For besides the paucity of such teachers, somewhat answering to the deaconesses of old, many other obstacles must be encountered. Against the frequent admittance of European ladies for a purpose so little appreciated, many doors will perhaps be closed. That in a few instances, the kindness of such visitors may be appreciated and gratefully acknowledged, is not a chimerical hope; but to calculate on their receiving a hearty welcome from many families, would be an irregular flight of the imagination. It is favourable for the scheme, that certain respectable

members of the Hindu community and staunch supporters of the Dharma Sabha, have often admitted foreigners into their houses for the tuition of their boys, and entertained European guests upon festive occasions with viands held in abomination by the orthodox natives. The dignitaries of the Hindu fraternity having tolerated the access of Mletchas, no scruples of a religious character will perhaps be harboured against the reception of ladies' visits for the purpose of female education ; nor can the Brahmins consistently discharge their ecclesiastical fulminations against a course of conduct, no more opposed to the tenets of their theology, than the practice of their opulent patrons upon every occasion of a grand nautch. We cannot therefore conceive how any proceedings can be openly and officially instituted to excommunicate those that may receive the educational visits alluded to. But what the Brahmins as a body may be forced to tolerate, owing to the laxity of the age, may yet be counteracted by the general tone of society. The novelty of the step will perhaps provoke jealousy, and subject it to the silent, but unequivocal sneers of the community, and the effect in a thousand instances will prove as hurtful as if the Dharma Sabha had itself fulminated ; for it would require as much resolution of mind to disregard biting insinuations, as the open opposition of the sacerdotal clan. A great barrier to private tuition within the boundaries of the

Zenana itself, may accordingly be prevented by the unworthy inuendoes and bitter taunts of one's own friends and neighbours.

False reports may be circulated to the annoyance of the spirited Hindu that may afford his women the advantages of instruction ; he will perhaps be charged with violating the rules of his sacred fraternity, and degrading the dignity of Brahminical discipline, by constant association with those, whom to touch were of itself an abomination. His name may become a proverb for habitually polluting the sanctity of a Hindu residence by admitting into its courts the defiled footsteps of an impure race.

These obstacles, though not insurmountable, will nevertheless thwart the operation of the plan alluded to, by proving in several instances too powerful to be contended against. Still, since they are not insurmountable, they are to be resolutely encountered ; and considering the little offence which the scheme proposed directly offers to the customs and institutions of the country, we may hope that as the blessings of female education will be more practically understood, and its influence even on our temporal interests more justly prized, many will be heroic enough to despise the taunts and sneers of their neighbours, and to contend for the cause of female emancipation in spite of their slanders. The educated native mind is not so destitute of moral energy that on matters of acknowledged importance it will

blindly submit to the clamour of an ignorant multitude, whom it holds in contempt, and treats with ridicule. Our countrymen may not be willing to provoke the jealousy and ill-will of their friends and neighbours for things which they have not learnt to appreciate. Nor can apathy in a cause which is itself not prized, be considered a conclusive evidence of a want of moral courage. Radical changes in manners and customs, which the mind has been inured to hold in reverence ever since it first began to think, and over which antiquity has spread her delusive charms, are not to be expected, but in the pursuance of objects which are *felt* to be momentous, and under the influence of motives, sufficiently powerful to counteract the force of early impressions, and the deep-rooted prejudices of early education. Few can adequately conceive, without actually experiencing, the difficulty which attends the task of reconciling one's self to new manners, new customs, new habits, and new modes of thought and action ; and the repugnance of the Hindus to female education is sufficiently accounted for, when its tendency to overturn the present structure of their domestic economy is minutely investigated. The ignorance of women is so interwoven with the entire government of the household, that no active measures can be extensively adopted, without tolerating considerable innovations in domestic life. Failures, if they attend our scheme for a time, ought not therefore to make us droop in despair ; but

on the contrary, they should move us to more determined and vigorous exertions, whereby to illustrate the advantages, and create among the natives a just appreciation, of female education.

We cannot here refrain from making reference to the attempts, made more than ten years ago, to introduce education into the harem of Mahomet Ali, the pasha of Egypt. The success which crowned the exertions of Miss Holliday in the land of Ham, must encourage the friends of female education in the pursuit of similar schemes of domiciliary instruction in Bengal. Our countrymen cannot guard their females more closely than the followers of the Arabian prophet ; and if an European lady could find means to recommend herself to the ladies of a Turkish palace, why may not similar openings be looked for in the mansions of the gentry of British India ? The friends of female education must however abstain from hasty interference with inveterate prejudices. The spirit of Him who in every practicable way condescended to human infirmities, and the example of the apostle who *was made all things to all men that he might by all means save some*, should ever be borne in mind in a country like India. He who is forced to give up what is within his reach in his eagerness to grasp at too much, cannot be exonerated from the charge of imprudence ; nor should the intelligent Christian consider himself as neglecting his Master's cause, if he be obliged to content himself for a time

with teaching nothing but literature and science. The sapper and the miner are agents as essential to the success of an army as the gunner and the musketeer. The counsel of Hekekyan Effendi to Miss Holliday, cannot be too strongly enforced upon the attention of similar labourers under similar circumstances.(f.)

The extensive spread of education through the Hindu College, the General Assembly's Institution, the Free church and other schools, which has caused, in Calcutta at least, a great movement in the native mind, opens a fair and cheerful prospect to our imagination, and is calculated to produce sanguine hopes regarding the future interests of India. It has turned the thoughts of the rising generation into a new channel, and imparted a degree of intellectual vigour which will not easily shake before the nod of a bigoted community. Our young friends have imbibed a spirit of mental independence, which renders them superior to a blind adulation of Brahminical authority; and which will fortify them against the encroachments of corrupt priestcraft. Already have a goodly number asserted their unrestricted right to think and act for themselves, by publicly abjuring the superstitions of the country in the very teeth of her false hierarchy,

(f) The history of Miss Holliday's intercourse with the ladies of Mahomet Ali's harem is so full of instruction that we have been tempted to reprint several extracts from her letters in the Appendix.

and by adopting a rational and a holy creed, in spite of the frantic rage of a depraved society; and if all have not displayed a like energy and fortitude, the whole community is still preparing for some great revolution, to signalize perhaps this very century, and to complete the triumph of knowledge against ignorance.

As the educated youths become masters of families, a wide field will be opening for the exercise of female benevolence. We may hope that many of their number will accept for their wives the advantages of education, if tendered within their doors. Their minds have been sufficiently strengthened by the ennobling effects of education, so as not to waver in the performance of acknowledged duties to their wives and daughters, when a feasible plan shall be laid before them. The plan to be feasible must wink at certain conventional customs believed to be essential to the preservation of social order; nor should it demand great pecuniary sacrifices. Their resources is not generally so large as to suffice for the employment of proper instructors for the members of their Zenanas; nor are the bonds of kindred and natural affection so fragile in their breasts, as to be violated by any motive short of those which true religion furnishes; and if the simple object of education involved disbursements of funds which they could not command, or insisted on a renouncement of caste and relations, for which no earthly advantages could be felt as an adequate compensation, it would be difficult

to conceive how the cause could prosper. But happily, the question of female education is not immediately connected with loss of caste, and may render a person obnoxious only to vain sarcasms from an ignorant and powerless multitude; and if it can be procured without great pecuniary sacrifices, a clear prospect will be before us, of, at least, a partial operation of the system.

The progress of the system, however, will mainly depend upon the infusion of a more kindly spirit. The apathy which marks the efforts of the Hindus for the elevation of their females, must be supplanted by an animating zeal before much can be expected. In proportion as our countrymen will appreciate the benefits accruing from the instruction of their wives, they will be persuaded to exert more powerfully, and to contend more decidedly, against the impediments in their way. Under the present circumstances, therefore, every effort that tends to rouse them from their moral lethargy, and to incite them to energetic action, must be acknowledged to be a preparatory step towards the consummation of the object. But with speculative expositions of its benefits, our patience has nearly been exhausted. The error of our friends, we are convinced, lies not in theory. They acknowledge the advantages of female education, and are not afraid or ashamed to assert them in their writings. In fact, verbal approbations of such a cause have become so fashionable in the new school, that a deep stigma is set upon a

person that presumes to raise a dissentient voice. But empty and theoretic assertions that survive not their articulation, have as yet procured no benefits for the sex ; and the cause shall continue stagnant, so long as the support it meets with is confined to mere wordy declamations. Even though the professed advocates of female improvement continue for ages to plead by their lips and pens, the objects of their benevolent declamation shall nevertheless continue in their present state, while nothing is *actually done*.

It is much to be regretted, that our intelligent countrymen have so little personal experience of the happy results of female education in European society. Although they can comprehend in theory the advantages to be derived from the instruction of their women, and may be fairly charged with coldness of heart and weakness of principle, for hesitating to act upon their convictions ; yet it must be acknowledged in justice to them, that their inactivity is neither surprizing nor unnatural. They understand speculatively, indeed, that females, when educated, must become more valuable members of society, and better fitted for the discharge of their duties ; but they have not as yet *practically* witnessed these effects. They have not as yet *seen with their eyes* the superiority which education imparts to female recipients ; the reports of female elevation of which they hear or read, cannot influence their hearts so much as ocular evidence might do. Few would be able to answer in

the affirmative, if asked, whether they had ever been in company with and spoken to *any* educated females ; and none could say, *yes*, if the question referred to their acquaintance with *many* superior members of the sex.

Whatever plans may introduce intelligent Hindus more extensively to the society of educated ladies, and thereby familiarize their senses with spectacles of female superiority, must operate like a magical spell upon the civilization of the country. Few minds are so dull as to witness the happy effects of female enlightenment among their neighbours, without a longing desire of enjoying the same blessings in their own family ; and an ocular attestation of what is at present known only from books and oral reports, cannot fail to exercise an actuating and a persuasive power peculiar to itself.

When such large bodies of Europeans are sojourning in the East with their ladies, the ocular evidence, which is so great a desideratum, is perfectly feasible. If every gentleman that desires the amelioration of native society, would condescend to allow the intelligent Hindus of his acquaintance a sight of what female education has done in his own domestic circle, by occasionally introducing them to his family, the happiest results might be anticipated. Man has been often styled an imitative creature, that is influenced more by the tangible effects of a beneficial scheme, than by all the theories and fairy prospects which his judgment or

his imagination can conceive or fancy. The actual operation and visible consequences of a salutary project are as greater incentives to duty than mere theories, as examples are more efficacious than precepts; and accordingly, if our educated countrymen can themselves witness the happy fruits of education among European females, their minds will receive an impetus, which cannot but lead to vigorous efforts for the reformation of their domestic lives.(g.)

If the minds of the rising generation be deeply imbued with impressions favourable to female education;

(g) We cannot help adverting in this place to the conversational parties that used to be held upwards of seventeen years ago in the house of a gentleman since departed from India. He devoted an evening once a fortnight to the cultivation and maintenance of social intercourse with his native acquaintance, to whom the doors of his drawing room were thrown open, and who were introduced to his family. Those of his own countrymen who did not think such familiarity with natives derogatory to their *dignity*, were also occasionally invited to join these interesting parties. The consequences of such social intercourse between Natives and Europeans surpassed all expectation. The conversation generally embraced local subjects, appertaining to the improvement of the people; and the degree of light thus diffused, and the zeal thus communicated, were incalculable. Unfortunately, however, this exemplary course could not be long pursued by the friend who assembled the parties. His peculiar profession forced him to discharge official duties in the night, and the meetings were necessarily discontinued.

if they be made, by constant intercourse with Europeans, to witness with their own senses the advantages produced upon society, and the benefits accruing to families, from the moral and intellectual improvement of women, more than half the work which we fondly desire, shall be thereby consummated. The elderly members of the Hindu community, who have been accustomed all their life to review with religious reverence the institutions of their country, and the examples of their ancestors, cannot be expected easily to renounce opinions and prejudices to which such sanctity is attached, or to discontinue practices endeared to them by the observance of their forefathers, and enforced by the advice of priests and the general tone of society. Much co-operation or assistance in the cause of female education cannot therefore be looked for from the older and more orthodox Hindus. These champions of Brahminism dote upon every thing which they find was sanctioned by Menu or Vyas, and are hostile to any advance towards improvement. But the rising generation who have themselves received a liberal education, and upon whom the tenets of Hinduism have but a feeble hold, and the Brahmins possess scarcely any ascendancy, who have imbibed from the examples of high-minded Reformers, commemorated in History, sentiments of aversion to antiquated superstitions, promise to become the most powerful and efficient instruments for helping in the cause of female education. If

opportunities be sought whereby to direct their energies to this great object, if proper and powerful inducements be offered in order to move them to ameliorate females under their influence, their good will and co-operation may be secured. If those whose opinions they treat with respect, and whose approbation they are ambitious of securing, constantly remind them of their duties to women, and they begin to feel that it would be almost disreputable to neglect one half of their wards and dependents, they may not only embrace with gratitude every opportunity offered by European benevolence of educating their wives and families, but also labour of their own accord to ensure this object. The youthful husband may then be filled with a desire of imparting to his wife those advantages which he has freely received at school, and thus a spirited beginning may be made to end with the most important consequences.

Large fields for the dissemination of education among females have been opened in those places, where great numbers of natives have embraced Christianity. Relieved from the spell of those prejudices which have perpetuated female degradation in the East, and stimulated by motives which are inseparable from a healthy state of Christianity, these Hindu Christians have the singular felicity of freely imparting to their daughters the advantages of a liberal education. But the author is deterred by a feeling of delicacy from expatiating on the efforts a community of which he is

himself a member, and which, though yearly rising in importance by fresh accessions, is still but a mere speck in native society. Nor must we confound the efforts of a few individual converts with cultivated minds, who have embraced Christianity after rational conviction, with the doings of the mass whose principles and motives must be estimated agreeably to what we are bound to believe in charity rather than according to what we can depose from actual observation. For it must be acknowledged that the vast majority of converts have come from the lowest ranks of Hindu society and are perfectly illiterate. But the religion they have adopted possesses a self-elevating power, the influence of which must eventually benefit the community of its recipients. We are aware, indeed, of the suspicions with which their strength of evangelical principle is viewed by many of their own friends and supporters ; but much, we are assured, may nevertheless be done among them and with them. In a country where a most monstrous and demoralizing system of error has prevailed for ages immemorial, it cannot be a matter of surprise, if the first converts be tainted with the corruptions under which they had so long lived and grown. Even of the European nations constituting the ornament of Christendom, the original converts were weak in the faith, and had but faintly adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour. The barbarians who emigrated from the vast plains of Central Asia,

and carried misery and desolation wherever they went, put on, upon their conversion, the form, without exhibiting in their lives, the power of godliness. It was not till the Gospel had taken deep root in their countries, that its influence was visible in their life and character ; and then what the fathers had merely *professed*, the sons *adorned* in the succeeding ages. Similar may in the Providence of God be the case with the multitudes that have embraced Christianity in India. However weak their own principles and doubtful their personal improvement, their children are under the influence and controul of their pastors ; and if the Church perform her duty to her neophytes, happy results may be anticipated with God's blessing upon her efforts. Not that we are at all to slacken our discipline with reference to the admission of new professors. We cannot be too cautious in the reception of candidates to the fellowship of the gospel. But as the most vigilant minister is not proof against deception, and as unworthy professors have crept in, we must do what we can to extract good from evils which we cannot avoid. Much may and ought to be done with their children, for whose education the Christian community is partly responsible, and whose characters must, to a certain extent, be influenced by the advice and instruction of their pastors and teachers.

We cannot here dissemble our surprisè at the little that has been done with the children of native Christians. We can name several individuals whose fathers

for two generations had been Christians by profession, and we know numbers who were born after the conversion of their parents. These have from their infancy been brought up more or less under the eye of European missionaries, and yet none from their ranks has to this day received any but an imperfect education; and strange to say, the only native catechists as yet raised in that great collegiate institution of the Church of England, which stands as a monument, on the banks of the Hooghly, of the piety and Christian energy of the first Protestant Bishop in India, are students of the Hindu and Medical Colleges, subsequently embracing Christianity. Not a single native has passed Bishop's College, whose parents were Christians, or whose elementary education was conducted under the auspices of a Missionary Society. (*h*)

We hope not to be understood to reflect against any of those respected and honoured individuals, who from love to God and regard for souls, have left the society of friends and relations, and have braved oceans and seas in order to preach the Gospel to the heathen. We would gladly bear testimony to the privations and troubles they voluntarily undergo, and the cares and anxieties which incessantly harass their minds in the prosecution of their Master's cause; and for the deficiencies we have

(*h*) A few native students have been received in Bishop's College since the publication of our first edition, who were born of Christian parents.

mentioned, the whole Christian community generally, and not any persons individually, appear to be responsible. One great cause which has occasioned the shortcomings alluded to, and sadly embarrassed the educational and other agencies of Missionary Societies, is the want of union, and consequently of strength, in the Church. So little do Christians of modern times *endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*, that sects and denominations have multiplied without number, and as each pursues a separate interest, and keeps a separate establishment, the large funds which Christian piety supplies, are spent upon multitudes of isolated schools, which, in consequence of these divisions, all become more or less inefficient. If the unity and uniformity which Christ himself so fervently desired (*John xvii. 21.*) were sought by those that bore his name, a graduated series of institutions, mutually depending upon each other, might be founded, from elemental and grammar schools, to academic and collegiate establishments ;(i) the children of Christian natives would not then occupy that degraded

(i) We are not here neglecting those most efficient institutions, the General Assembly's and the Free Church. These will not, however, perhaps answer for a long time to come the object of training up *the children of native Christians*. The respected Missionaries of the Scottish Churches have no large *native Christian congregations* under their care, from which to draw many *Christian* students for their institutions.

and prostrate position in morals, intellectuals, and spirituals, which is at present their portion.

To return from this digression ;—we consider the education of the female children of native Christians as a great step toward the instruction of the weaker sex in the country, and most decidedly would we raise our feeble voice in support of the appeals made from time to time for the education of Christian children in the interesting district of Kishanghur. We hope however that the managers of Missions will aim at a high standard in the education they bestow.

The establishment of infant schools in different parts of the country, for the instruction of both male and female children, would also greatly help the cause of female education. The Hindus do not seclude their women in the tender age of childhood, and might be easily prevailed upon to send them to school as infants, if respectable institutions were opened. The effects of such a system would perhaps surpass all expectation, and lead to a new æra in the history of our females. Many husbands would gladly, as they might easily, keep up the instruction of their wives, where it had already been carried to a certain height ; and if the case has been otherwise with those whose partners have been instructed in the central and other schools, it is because the husbands in the lower classes (and the present public schools have never been able to attract the higher orders) are themselves illiterate, and

could neither help nor encourage their wives to continue their education.

But we must not be understood to look with very fond hopes or sanguine expectations on any of the plans we have suggested above. As almost the only expedients that can be adopted under present circumstances, with any prospect of success, they are doubtless entitled to a fair trial. But the progress of female education depends so much upon the social improvement of the nation, that we cannot calculate upon much success before we advance considerably in civilization. The education of females may at the same time be considered a cause and an effect of social improvement. The one is intimately associated with the other. No people can be civilized while their women are in a state of moral and intellectual prostration; nor can women be long suffered to pine in ignorance, when civilization is once introduced. Neither the way here recommended of sending female teachers into the Zenana, nor any other that is imaginable, can work vigorously before the demoralizing institutions of Brahminism are subverted by the sacred fabric of divine truth, and before the secular affairs of our countrymen prosper under the twofold influence of more liberal and humane legislation on the part of our conquerors, and of more industrious and active habits in our own community. While the women continue as exiles from society under the sentence of seclusion, and while they are forced to accept

unknown husbands long before the dawn of reason in their minds, little can be attempted with any hope of success for ameliorating their condition. The authority of Menu and Vyas must be superseded by the higher sanctions of divine inspiration, before a complete, or even an extensive, emancipation of the weaker sex can be expected in India. If our educated countrymen consider attentively the lessons of history, they will easily discover the true remedy for the perils of female society, and ascertain what has proved the most mighty instrument in the enfranchisement of women. It is a remarkable fact, striking the senses of the most superficial observer, that Christianity, and Christianity alone, has as yet been their most faithful and devoted friend. By practically inculcating the salvability of their souls, and their responsibility as moral agents, the Gospel furnished a provision for their comforts and improvement, which has teemed with such happy consequences in the West. The father was taught the duty of educating his daughter as an intelligent and moral agent; the husband was instructed on the propriety of loving his wife, even as Christ loved his Church; and on society was enforced the obligation of honouring those that composed the *better* half of the human species. The practices of polygamy, of unlawful and arbitrary divorces, and of tyranny over the weaker sex were thus eradicated from the face of Christendom; and an impetus was communicated to the cause

of female elevation, the effects of which are visible in the society of European ladies. Previous to a like radical change in the sentiments and feelings of our countrymen, and a like stimulus to female improvement conveyed by the sanctifying influence and the holy motives of the Gospel, one could not look with sanguine hopes for the full consummation of our object. The unhappy captive in the Zenana cannot be rescued so long as the inhuman monster that sentenced her incarceration, is not spoiled of his dominion and banished from the land ; nor can the degradation of our sisters admit of complete relief, before the nation will acknowledge the truth, and be actuated by the spirit of that religion, whereof one characteristic motto is, " Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

But though our own belief is that female education will not generally prevail before the introduction of Christianity, we are prepared to hail with joy every movement toward the instruction of our country-women. An enlightened Hindu, that is not himself a Christian, will of course disagree with us in our anticipations. We shall rejoice to find him realizing the idea of female instruction in the present state of society. We shall rejoice to see any person, whatever be his religious creed, leading in the great cause of improving the fairer half of the population of India. This cause demands the most attentive consideration

on the part of all who can appreciate the benefits of knowledge. Those, especially, who would make us believe that pure Hinduism, the unadulterated teaching of the Vedas, is in itself a most rational body of divinity, are bound to show that their theory is not practically incompatible with the improvement of their wives, daughters, and sisters.

As our improvement in spirituals is necessary to awake us to a sense of our duties, and thereby stimulate our exertions for the welfare of just one half the human species, so is the temporal amelioration of our condition necessary to the execution of our project. It is a sad but an undeniable fact, that the greatest portion of our countrymen can ill dispense with the services of their women to afford them leisure for study, and are forced by their reduced circumstances to impose upon them their whole domestic drudgery. This hard necessity must long teach them the policy of perpetuating the ignorance and degradation of those, for whose intellectual recreation they can allow no vacation, and whom they cannot exempt from the meanest employments of the house. The mental exertion which the reception of education requires, can scarcely be made with any success, while the hand is full of such a variety of hard tasks as falls to the lot of the woman in Hindustan; nor can placidness and contentment, in a mind capable of literary occupations, consist with incessant calls to the most laborious.

and fatiguing toils. What time or taste can our sisters have for intellectual amusement, while they are continually worried by the alternate performance of the duties of sweepers, bearers, cooks, khetmutgars, and masalchees? And yet their husbands cannot help this. The rooms must be swept, the beds and lights must be prepared, the meals must be dressed and served out, the plates must be cleaned; and if the men must attend to their professional employments, and their poverty allow not the entertainment of servants, the tasks must devolve upon the women. How then can the natives be reasonably expected, under such circumstances, imprudently to encourage a system of education, which may interrupt the performance of domestic business, and create in the females a refined taste for expensive articles, the gratification whereof must multiply calls upon their exhausted purses?

Under this extensive view of things, every attempt that is made to enlighten and convert, to enrich and raise the males from their present spiritual and temporal condition, must eventually exercise a happy influence upon the welfare of the women. Knowledge must be disseminated, superstition must be eradicated, truth must be implanted, trade and the arts must be countenanced, indigenious talent, genius, and industry must be encouraged, before a considerable change can be expected in native society; and prior to such a change, much improvement

cannot take place in the most delicate point of treatment to females. Men must be reclaimed from a blind adulation of custom, the sanctifying energies of truth must work upon them, the languor and inclemency of poverty must be removed from the leading members of society, before the Hindus will set their hearts upon such a total reform of domestic life, as female education, if extensively diffused, will call for. To expect that they will at once relieve their partners from hard manual task, or that these will turn to good account an immediate lift to the post enjoyed by the educated ladies of the West, is to expect a miracle. If the past dealings of Divine Providence may form good criteria for anticipating the future, no sanguine expectations can reasonably be entertained. For centuries did the renovating truths of the Gospel shed their benign influence upon Europe, once involved, more deeply perhaps than Asia, in darkness, before society acquired its present tone, and put on its present features. Long had the powers of the human mind developed in various ways, and commerce and the arts had helped the cause of human improvement, before the spectacle of female enfranchisement, such as we now see, was exhibited. And is a precocious advancement to be expected in India? Are we to do here in a few years, what was not achieved in Europe before many ages? Are inveterate evils of deeper root to be eradicated in a

moment from Hindu society, when the work of destroying the same in Europe occupied so many centuries, and required such continued exertions?

Thus then we see that previous to the conversion of the natives, and the amelioration of their temporal condition, much cannot be looked for in the way of female education. It is impossible that many can be instructed under the present unfavourable circumstances. Respectable native females must be raised up as tutoresses and schoolmistresses, and the women must be liberated from their imprisonment and relieved from their laborious tasks, before the cultivation of letters can come into general vogue among them. But such a system can never be introduced before the dissemination of the gospel, and the social improvement of the people.

We must here take the liberty of reminding our British conquerors of the duties devolving upon them from their peculiar position in the East. Divine Providence has tolerated their elevation to the dignity of rulers in an empire, which even the Macedonian victor had failed to annex to his almost unlimited dominions. They are now enjoying precedence and supremacy in a land, which had from time immemorial attracted the eye of the world, but of which, by their birth, they possessed not even the rights of citizenship. They are deriving wealth, and patronage, and influence, and power

from a country, thousands of miles distant from the place which gave them birth. Is it to be supposed that God has crowned their projects with success, and signalized their arms with victory, for the sole purpose of multiplying their enjoyments, extending their patronage, and increasing their opulence? Was it only that they might taste the milk and honey with which the heritage flowed, that they have been suffered to obtain such a firm footing in India? By no means! He that had promised to his Son, "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," rescued this vast empire from the clutches of Brahma and Mahomet, that the standard of the Cross might supplant those of the *Trishula* and the *Crescent*. He that had predetermined the preaching of his Gospel unto all creatures, and the restoration of the numberless sheep he owned among the Gentiles, entrusted the country to his favoured servants of Christian Britain, that the superstructure of divine truth might accompany the erection of their castles and fortresses, and that the religion of peace, with all its attendant blessings, domestic and social, might be offered to the adoption, and commended to the consciences of the people, about to be emancipated from the thralldom of demons and monsters. So long then, and so far only, as our masters labour in the execution of these great purposes, they rightly retain

their vassalage under God. How immensely does this consideration enhance their obligations in the sight of the Almighty! It is their part not only to assist, but to take the lead in the improvement of the country, and the regeneration and complete civilization of her inhabitants! If the possession of gospel knowledge, and the enjoyment of the two-fold promises of gospel godliness, entail of themselves the most weighty obligations on their partakers, so that every Christian may say with St. Paul, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise;" how much more pressing do these duties become, when, in addition to these advantages, the facilities that have been opened, and the active influence that has been vouchsafed to the British nation, is taken into account?

Be it understood that we are talking generally of the duties which Christian England owes to her heathen dependancy India. We acknowledge with gratitude that our country is infinitely better off under British auspices, than she ever was within the memory of man. Neither the Mogul, nor the Afghan, nor any of our own native dynasties, understood the principles of that enlightened policy, which is the glory of British supremacy. We do not therefore mean to deny our own obligations to England, when we still speak of her duties to us. We are fully sensible of the improvements effected in our country under her in-

fluence ; of the security we enjoy under her powerful protection ; of the progress of education under the immediate patronage of the local governments ; of the encouragement tendered to native talent, and the removal of invidious distinctions and disabilities as far as the power of the authorities on the spot extends ; of the stimulus given to the commerce of the country and the development of its wealth ; of the principle of a representative government generously introduced by the municipal act of 1847. We also acknowledge with thankfulness the piety and charity of many a private society in England, devoting large funds for the spiritual improvement of our countrymen. Why then, it may be asked, do we still admonish our governors on their duty ? Simply because there is room for further improvement ; because our estimate of British duty is formed by a consideration of the high principles which distinguish the august legislature of Westminster ; because Britain stands on a proud eminence as the improver and civilizer of the world. The children of a great man may be excused for lofty aspirations which might ill befit the offspring of a pauper ; the subjects of a great sovereign may desire boons, proportioned to the moral dignity of their rulers.

We have already remarked that the temporal amelioration of our countrymen is necessary for the improvement of our females, and it may not be irrelevant

to add that this amelioration depends in a great measure on a still more liberal encouragement of native talent on the part of our rulers. The local governments of India have indeed given this encouragement to the utmost of their power, and it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge that we could not be placed under governors more humane. They have never neglected the claims of native subjects in the distribution of preferments. But their hands are fettered; their powers are restricted. They can only make *Deputy* Collectors, *Deputy* Magistrates, *Deputy* judges (i. e. Moonsiffs and Sudder Ameen,) and *Sub-assistant* Surgeons. In appointments of greater importance their choice is limited by law. Is it unreasonable to desire, now that the country can produce so much of indigenous talent, that the supreme ruler of this magnificent appendage of the British crown, representing the majesty of a kingdom, at once the most powerful and the most civilized on the face of the globe, may be unfettered in his selection of public functionaries? may be invested with those powers of which even the viceroys of the Afghan and Mogul dynasties were not destitute? The possession of such unrestricted powers will, on the one hand, impart to the British Proconsul the full complement of the dignity, due to the representative of a sovereign, whose dominions extend to every quarter of the globe, and to the supreme ruler of a country which produces an annual revenue of twenty crores of

Rupees ; and it will, on the other hand, supply every one, permanently attached to the soil, with fresh motives of self-improvement, and stimulate him with the laudable ambition of serving his country under the auspices of a powerful and paternal government. The administration of some of the Mogul emperors was rendered illustrious in India by the co-operation of Hindu and Mahometan functionaries in the service of the state ; but that lustre will dwindle into the glimmering of a feeble taper, when a galaxy of Todermuls and Man Sings will reflect the full blaze of the policy, which magnifies the honor, and consolidates the power of Great Britain, while it raises the character, and promotes the social improvement of the most distant nations of the Earth.

But it is time to relieve the reader's patience ; we will trespass only a few moments longer on his attention, while we briefly advert to the duties our own countrymen owe to themselves, their families, and their country. The regeneration and complete civilization of India are objects, with reference to which, the duty and interest of the natives are intimately linked together. They ought therefore to put forth all their energies for the amelioration of their native land. And much depends on their personal exertions. The philanthropic efforts of Europeans can be no avail, so long as the natives will not help themselves. However liberal the parliament may be in its legislation for India,

and how zealously soever the local governments may give effect to laws calculated to improve the social condition of their subjects, no permanent good can result unless the people introduce reforms in their own households; unless those that are educated reduce their principles to practice in their own homes. Many there are who can beautifully theorize on female improvement; how small the number that is resolved to verify the theory! Many there are that can inveigh against the custom of giving away infant girls by early marriages; perhaps none has yet waxed bold enough *practically* to protest against the evil. How long is the present state of things to continue? How long is principle to be sacrificed to custom, fear, or policy? The custom is acknowledged to be vicious; the fear is groundless; the policy is questionable. The heads of Hindu *dals* or clans may threaten with excommunication the spirited individual that may think of rescuing his daughter from the debasing effects of the Hindu rules of marriage; but the number of educated natives is sufficiently large to form a *dal* of their own. Why do they not attempt it? No exertions can be more patriotic, more worthy of instructed minds, more honourable in themselves and beneficial to India, than efforts to improve the tone of female society and to ameliorate its condition. Let the educated Hindus discontinue the farce of a child of eight or nine entering into a solemn matrimonial contract; let them in their own turn brand with the

stigma of inhumanity, the man who would sacrifice the lasting interests of his daughter for the sake of maintaining his caste; let them excommunicate from *their dal* those who would continue to perpetuate female degradation. Such a practical exhibition of principle would be truly heroic; it would embalm the memory of the leading reformers in the estimation of the latest posterity; it would raise the Bengali character beyond conception, and put the bitterest of our detracting opponents to silence.

Nor must it be forgotten that righteousness exalteth a nation. We are far from desiring that our countrymen should adopt our opinions on our own credit; Christianity itself repudiates the idea of depending on no other basis than human influence. But addressing ourselves to intelligent and educated men, we do not perhaps incur the danger of being mistaken or misrepresented, when we say, that it is the part of a rational man to inquire for himself and satisfy his mind of religious truth. No social reform in India can be complete without the aid of true religion. False religion deteriorates the mind; *no religion* leaves a blank in it, and deprives society of its only great bond. It is when true religion sheds its benign influence over the instructed mind, that nations and individuals may expect all the improvement of which they are capable.

And it will be an act of treachery to our country, and of ingratitude to the truth, if we do not testify, in

conclusion, to the POWER of the religion, which, as our countrymen are aware, we have deliberately adopted, and openly profess. The author feels no hesitation in declaring that if he has been able at all to carry out in his own house the principle of female education which he has been recommending to his countrymen, the success of the measure, such as it is, is to be attributed to the influence of Christianity. It is to that influence that the ladies of Europe owe their rise in society ; and if the females of Bengal be ever generally educated, we can scarcely conceive any other than the same instrument being at work. We believe we state a well-known fact when we say that at the present moment, perhaps the only native girls who are systematically educated, are the daughters or wards of those who deliberately acknowledge the truth, and are practically influenced by the spirit of the Christian religion.



APPENDIX.

A

The following letter in the *Sadhu Ranjan* of 17th Srabun 1255 was referred to in p. 50.

“I beg leave to send you the following representation of the miserable condition of our countrywomen. I shall feel it a lasting obligation if you kindly insert it in a corner of your valuable paper.

“How hard-hearted are the Hindu gentry of Bengal? Though we have in the providence of God been created weak and simple-hearted women, yet is that a reason why you should exhibit such cruelty and inhumanity toward us? Shall we far ever spend our days in misery? Shall we ever grope in the darkness of ignorance, and be engaged day and night in the drudgery of the house, and the service of our husbands? Oh the hardness of fortune! No man exerts himself for the education of the poor girls of this country. No one appears to be in earnest for this cause. I have heard from my dearest husband that many young men of the rising generation speak of instructing us, and that they occasionally show sufficient boldness in encouraging such attempts. But how great is our misfortune? This magnanimous intention on the part of our youth is not realized. Still we can never sufficiently admire them. Our fervent prayer to the Most High is that they may live long to carry their excellent resolutions into effect. Let the intelligent and the learned consider that we are creatures of God no less than they; we are also na-

turally endowed with reason and intellect, and it is our common Creator to whom we owe the preservation of our lives. The Preserver of the whole creation is of infinite mercy and infinite knowledge. But though we have intellects, we live in ignorance of Him; though blessed with eyes, we cannot observe the wonderful symmetry of His creation. Is this matter for little regret? The vices to which our minds are inclined owing to our ignorance, need not be described by the ignorant themselves; those that have a love of knowledge can understand the effects of ignorance, even though they may never see an ignorant man. The Shasters have well described the misery and wretchedness of ignorance :

“ Fire may be counteracted by water, rain and the sun by an umbrella, the fierce elephant by the sharp goad, the cow and the ass by strokes of the rod, various diseases by various medicines, and poisons by incantations; but there is no remedy for ignorance.”

Consider how unfitted we are for pleasant, rational, or instructive discourses with our companions. The only colloquy of which we are capable is of the following sort: “ What was cooked in your house to-day? how many curries? how many persons dined? how is your *he*? I hope he comes to you daily at night.” This is the only sort of conversation into which we enter when we meet with any of our sex. What more then need I write of our adverse fortune? What remedy can we have for our mental distresses? before whom are we to complain of them? Alas! shall we never enjoy any happiness in the world? Shall we be for ever doomed to incarceration in the Zenana without committing any fault, and pass our lives in ignorance? Shall we ever have to undergo the troubles of the household, the reproaches of our neighbours; and the stigma of ig-

norance? Shall our lives fruitlessly pass in preparing your meals? Shall we ever live in misery and distress? We can then have recourse to thee alone, O Death! We long to meet thee and receive relief from thee. Have mercy on us, wretches, and deliver us from the hands of the hard-hearted men of this country, that we may never have to see their faces any more. We have no other means of deliverance than thee."

A MUFFUSILE LADY.

B

The following letter to the Author was adverted to in p. 74.

"I am really glad to find that you are about to publish, in a revised form, your Essay on female education. I certainly wish that the question of female education should not be viewed as if it were settled. It should be discussed and agitated till some practical means were adopted for the due execution of the object we have in view. Our preachings should never cease—our energies should not be allowed to slumber—our voice should not stop, though feeble and faint it be—till the trumpet of alarm is sounded—till it is heard all over the city—till husbands are awakened to a true sense of those duties—duties that are equally awful and sacred—which they have hitherto neglected;—and till mothers are convinced that the education of their children should not be delegated to other hands but those which nursed and cradled them up from their state of childhood. Hindu community as it is at present constituted, presents a deplorable state of moral degradation. Rich Baboos, wallowing in all the filth of unruly desires: wives knowing no other attachments towards their husbands but those of a carnal character; fathers and mothers, caring no more for the education of their children than

what is barely sufficient to make them sly negotiators in money transactions.—Oh what a wretched picture is all this!—Oh what degeneration! who could view it for a moment without dropping a tear of commiseration. Mothers, Wives, and Husbands—would it not have been an act of mercy if you were strangled in the very womb of creation by some abortive process of Nature rather than to be thus ushered in this wide world in such a miserable condition? Some as slaves, as dependants, as ministers to carnal gratifications—and some as actual rebels in the sight of God. These are my feelings upon the subject in question, and you have expressed them eloquently in your little work on female education. I only wish that something should be done for the adoption of the plan you have recommended in your Essay. You have left little room for any suggestion that I can offer. But if I were called upon to hazard any opinion, I should say that a series of works in English and Bengallee upon the Hamiltonian system of translation should be published; because I have found, that European tutoresses cannot adequately convey their thoughts to Native pupils. Notwithstanding the splendid apparatus that my father had laid down for the education of my late lamented sister, still I must confess that her success was not quite commensurate with the expectations that were formed by her friends; and that owing in a great measure to a defective system that was adopted for her education, and to want of intercourse with European ladies. I wish that you would enter into the details of your system, because it is necessary that you should point out distinctly the plan by which a female mind in this country might be gradually developed and materially assisted in its progress through the English language. In a word, lay down in a detailed form your plan of Education: with what books a tutoress is to commence: and how is she to proceed.”

C.

*Extracts from the History of the Society for promoting
Female Education in the East.*

In the course of this year, 1836, the attention of the Society was called to an entirely new sphere, by an unexpected offer of service in Egypt. Miss Alice Holliday had for a long time contemplated that country with especial interest, and an earnest desire to consecrate herself to its intellectual and moral elevation, through the medium of its female population, with an eye ultimately to the benefit of Abyssinia. She had pursued a course of preparatory study, and had devoted her attention to some of the severer sciences, to Antiquities, particularly those of Egypt, and to the Arabic and Coptic languages. When her circumstances allowed her to think of the undertaking as an immediate practical matter, she was not aware of the existence of a Society for the distinct object of Promoting Female Education in the East, but addressed herself to the British and Foreign School Society. The appointment she sought did not come within the scope of that Society's plans, and her application was forwarded to ours. She was accepted, and allowed to indulge her long-cherished desire, accompanied by a friend, Miss Rogers, whose pecuniary resources would be available for the support of both, with occasional aid from home. After some delays, these ladies embarked upon their difficult enterprise, furnished with introductions to missionaries and other persons likely to assist their object in Malta and Egypt.

Some extracts from their correspondence will show the nature of Miss Holliday's engagements during the first year of her residence in Egypt.

“ Cairo, Jan. 25, 1837.

“ We left Alexandria about the beginning of December, and after a voyage of eight days, reached Bonlac, the port of Cairo. Here Mr. L. had stationed a man to give him notice of our approach, and, when informed of it, came to escort us to the lodgings prepared for us in Mr. Krusé’s house. After becoming in some degree known to Mr. L., he told us that he had hailed our arrival with joy, for that a person capable of giving [an education to the superior females, was, and would continue to be, much wanted in Egypt.

“ We are labouring with all diligence at the language. On all hands we are encouraged to proceed, as soon as possible, to the pleasing work of native teaching, although I do not expect it will be so much in the way of school-keeping, as in the capacity of a daily governess amongst the higher orders of the people; but dear Miss Rogers can take care of the former. I wish it had been in my power to have begun directly; however, what I know of the language, will considerably advance its more perfect acquirement. A wide door is now open in Egypt for the spread of education and civilisation, and for inculcating the elements of truth to the rising generation. It is truly cheering to see how extensively the desire of knowledge is diffusing itself throughout this Mahometan country.”

The condition of the Coptic women is truly lamentable, their abodes are like the filthiest holes in London, yet their persons are decked out in the most costly apparel. I have seen ladies sitting at their latticed windows, their heads and necks adorned with pearls and diamonds of the highest value, their bodies covered

with the richest silks and velvets, while the room they occupied was the most disgusting scene you can imagine. Smoking and sleeping, or playing on a miserable instrument, is their usual method of destroying time.

Aug. 21, 1837.

“Female schools for reading seem never to have been thought of in this country. Their prejudices against such instruction are very strong. Among the higher classes, however, since the power of Mahomet Ali has been established on a firmer basis, these prejudices are fast breaking, and in several instances, the more intelligent natives have been brought to see, in some degree, the advantages of female education. Very little effort, however, has been made on their part to accomplish this object. None of the higher classes have ever yet been collected into schools, but many are taught privately in their own houses.”

Miss Holliday was left to labour alone, her friend and companion Miss Rogers having been removed by death, when an unexpected opening introduced her to an entirely new sphere of influence.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MISS HOLLIDAY.

“Cairo, March 22, 1837.

“On Wednesday 7th, I was officially waited on by one of the officers of state, Hekekyan Effendi, who had come directly from His Highness, Mahomet Ali, and formally asked if I would take in charge the education of the royal females, consisting of a hundred in number, principally his daughters, nieces, and nearest relatives. Hekekyan said, ‘This is only the beginning of female education in Egypt, for the

Pasha has much larger views, but he wishes first to try the experiment on his own family. Much depends upon the approbation of his eldest daughter whether instruction shall spread through the country ; only gain her favour and regard, and you will carry every point to your utmost wishes.' I begged for a few days' consideration. I felt I was already engaged in an important work, which I ought not to neglect for any pecuniary advantage, princely as it may be. One of His Highness's objects is that I shall endeavour to form his eldest daughters into a committee, to take into consideration the best means of extending female schools throughout Egypt, and his other acquired dominions ; and it is further His Highness's wish that they should be superintended by Englishwomen.

**EXTRACT OF A LETTER ADDRESSED TO MISS HOLLIDAY
BY HEKEKYAN EFFENDI.**

" Saturday, 21st of Zilhegge, 1253.

" Previously to the Viceroy's departure for the Said, I was directed by the Terguiman Bey to inform you that on the evening of the second day of the Koorban Beyram, His Highness had examined the box of babies' clothes, and the specimens of needlework and drawings, which you had the kindness to send ; and that His Serene Highness had been extremely pleased with them, and had expressed his desire that you should visit his daughter, Nazly Hanum, two or three times a week, at Castel Giubarra and that you should give her your advice as to the best course to be pursued in commencing the education of his children. His Highness was in considerable perplexity as to the fate of the pretty little doll which was in the box, and which is destined to remain in the hands of the little Moham-

med Ali Bey. He would not give it to his father, and with tears in his eyes begged to keep the doll in exchange of his little sabre, as the only thing of value he possessed.

“ You have, no doubt, heard and read much about harems, and about the details of the domestic life of Turks ; I have, however, never met with any printed publication in which the information given, corroborated any personal observations on that subject. We pay great respect to our ladies, and we allow them absolute rule in our domiciles ; and though we are never influenced by the restraints of *society*, yet we behave with peculiar deference towards the *aged*, whatever be our personal importance *out* in the world. Our children, however, are uneducated in the European sense of the term, for they are devoid of those branches of knowledge, which, on their becoming parents, might be instilled by them in the tender minds of their offspring. In addition to their ignorance they experience the absence of internal economy, and it is in the middling and lower classes of the community where this ignorance is so profound as to endanger, by its dire consequences, domestic health, peace, and prosperity ; and this want of interior economy, which it is to be hoped is on the eve of improvement, is the first cause of slavery and its concomitant vices. In introducing an enlightened female education in Egypt, we shall be striking at the root of the evils, which afflict us.

“ In seconding my illustrious Prince and benefactor in his work of civilizing Egypt, I have been led to reflection by the nature of my duties, and have as yet been able to trace our debasement to no other cause than that of the want of an efficient moral and useful education in our females. I believe that in elevating the soul by initiating it in the mysteries and beauties of nature, through the means of geography

astronomy, botany, geology, natural history, &c., in proportion as we better comprehend the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Great First Cause, so are we enabled of ourselves to detect our own errors, and feel a secret invitation within our own bosoms to abandon them. In instructing the mind and the body in those innocent, useful, and varied occupations which are the peculiar employment of females, we enable them to escape those dangers and misfortunes which are induced by the disorders of ignorance and idleness. Habits of industry, cleanliness, order, and economy, by increasing domestic happiness, will not only tend to make us better beings, but will also secure to our children that maternal education, which is perhaps the most important provision which can be made for after life in this narrow world, and without which no succeeding efforts to obliterate the evil impressions received in early youth can be effectual.

“His Highness was pleased to command that Mrs. Hekekyan should accompany you to the harem. Thus you will not be treated as a stranger by the Ottoman ladies. I will introduce her to you on the earliest possible opportunity, that you may proceed together to Castel Giubarra. You will do well to take one of the school ushers with you to act as an interpreter; and I presume the necessary arrangements, both of a general nature, and such as concern yourself more particularly, will have been settled between you and Nazly Hanum before a second or third visit.”

EXTRACTS FROM MISS HOLIDAY'S JOURNAL AND LETTERS.

“Cairo, March 27, 1833.

“This day is among the most remarkable of my life: About 10 A.M. Mrs. Krusé, Mrs. Hekekyan

and myself, mounted on donkeys, set out for the harem. On our way we called for Capt. Lyons' janissary. Mr. Wahn, the vice-consul, coming up at the time, said, 'You must take mine also for the honour of the dear old Island.' Thus preceded by two janissaries in full dress, with their silver sticks of office, we went towards the Casa Debara, my heart being prayer to the Lord the whole time that He would make His way plain before me. With many fears we arrived at the gate of a long avenue, which is the first strong door of the harem; we next came to another strong gate, where the janissaries and donkeymen were ordered to remain, while we were waited on by several eunuchs, who took us through another strong gate, and soon after ushered us into a long and stately saloon, where there were numerous ladies busily at work. We were then shown into an ante-room, and served with coffee, out of some of the most splendid cups, set with diamonds, I have ever beheld. Our attendants were young and beautiful slaves, evidently Greek, Georgian, and Circassian. One brought us coffee, another sherbet, and a third handed sugar, each waiter having numerous slaves to attend upon her below the dail; after this a splendid pipe, with a massive amber mouth-piece, set with large diamonds, was offered to Mrs. Hekekyan, but refused, that lady conforming more to European than Oriental usages. Two little girls were then brought in to us; they came up to me and lounged upon me with the greatest confidence, as if accustomed to such endearments; they were evidently some part of the royal family, from their likeness to the Pasha. In about a quarter of an hour an old lady, evidently high in office, came to conduct us to Her Highness. We followed her into another side apartment, where we were introduced to the princess. We found Nazly Hanum sitting on a high divan in the corner of the

room. Mrs. Krusé and myself made our European salutation, but Mrs. Hakekyan had to prostrate herself at her feet, and kiss the hem of her garments. She condescendingly moved her hand in salutation, and then smilingly told us to be seated on the divan nearest her. Nazly Hanum is a little woman, rather fat, apparently about forty years of age. Her countenance is striking in extreme, particularly her eyes—indeed I never saw a more piercing eye in my life; she is said to be exceedingly like her father. Her dress was very simple, consisting of a black silk handkerchief round the head, secured at the side by a diamond pin, a shirt of white English net, which quite concealed the bosom, a robe of blue cloth, evidently English; and round her body was wrapped a splendid Cashmere shawl, from which hung suspended a magnificent watch and chain. She almost immediately inquired which was the teacher, and on my being pointed out to her, asked me several questions in Turkish, which Mrs. Hekekyan translated. By this time all my nervous fears had vanished. Her questions were pertinent, and showed that she had the improvement of her household at heart; she wished me much to come and live in the house, saying that every liberty should be allowed me; I of course declined this offer, but thanked her for the honour intended. It was at last agreed that I should teach for the first few months four hours every day, *i. e.* from 9 o'clock A.M. to 1 o'clock P.M. I found, that owing to my very imperfect knowledge of the Turkish language (the Arabic not being spoken in the harems) I could only devote myself to ornamental teaching at first, till time, patience, and application should open the door to a more useful labour. The princess was evidently pleased with me, for she seldom took her eyes off me for a second. She was smoking the whole time, while a crowd of ladies stood below the

dais, watching her every movement. We took our departure from Her Highness about noon."

" April 2.

" Early this morning I rose and prepared for entering upon my sphere of labour. I took with me all I thought would interest Her Highness, and set off, praying that the Lord would give me the strength I needed in this strange mode of teaching. I passed the soldiers at the first gate, and one of the servants ushered me into the harem, where I found the princess engaged with her ladies in superintending the thorough cleaning of the grand saloon; she was standing on a small Turkish carpet, giving directions to the servants, who were all busily employed in obeying them. On seeing me enter she quitted her occupation, saying *Ta, hahe ye Cittee Seneora* (Come O lady!), beckoning me to follow her into her private apartment. On entering, I stood at a respectful distance from her, but she insisted on my taking a seat near her; she then, in the name of God, the most merciful, the most high, &c., inquired after my health, and the usual morning salutations were given and returned. My boxes and bags being brought before her, more than a dozen ladies were called in to inspect their contents. Every thing was examined with the greatest attention. I had taken with me several books with pictures, in order to see, from her manner, which she would have preferred if I had the power of teaching; I soon found that with one accord they wanted no books, these were therefore dismissed. Nazly Hanum wished to begin some muslin work, which I instantly prepared, showing her how to execute it; she seemed much pleased with her labour, and really did it with considerable neatness. In a short time I had more than a dozen of my royal pupils at work, some with

lace work, others with fancy work, and a few with muslin. At a little after 11 o'clock Her Highness's dinner was brought in by about thirty slaves; a silver basin and jug, with a richly embroidered napkin, was given to me, while a young Circassian slave poured the water on my hands, a still more beautiful girl doing the same office for the princess. A small table, inlaid with pearl and silver, was placed before her, over which was thrown a cloth of velvet and gold; then came forward three slaves bearing a large silver tray, about four feet in diameter, which was placed on the table. I was then called to take my seat near her, when a slave covered my lap with an embroidered napkin, and another gave me a French cambric handkerchief for my mouth. The table was completely filled with silver plates, salts, peppers, and within the pickle dishes of gold were glasses of deep cut glass; my spoon, knife and fork were of the same massive silver as the table and dishes, differing only from those of Her Highness in not having, like hers, the handles set with precious stones. My plate was changed with every dish; more than fifty dishes succeeded each other on the table, indeed in such quick succession that there was barely time to taste many of them. I was, however, so pressed by looks and signs, and nods and winks, first to have this, then to have that, that I really felt at last afraid of seeing them. Although a knife and fork was by the princess, yet she preferred pulling the meat and fowls to pieces with her fingers (the usual way of eating in this country); but there was nothing uncleanly in the way she did it, and it was performed with the greatest dexterity. As a mark of particular honour, she broke two or three hard-boiled eggs, and laid them on my plate, frequently placing on it also the choicest part of the dish before us. When she partook a second time of any dish, a little bell was rung. Towards the ante-

room there were no fewer than three great silver trays, each filled with nine or ten dishes, and as one tray was emptied another took its place. Each tray was supported by three black slaves, richly dressed, who stood like three statues; at the foot of the divan, on each side of the room (the divans range all round the room, except the side where the entrance is), stood three young and beautiful girls, also splendidly dressed, with their eyes constantly fixed on their mistress, one holding a fly-chaser, another a censer, a third a cup with water, a fourth a basin and ewer, a fifth a towel worked with gold, and the sixth the little bell before mentioned. Dinner being finished, to my great relief, our hands were washed, Her Highness retired to sleep, and I returned to my children."

Alexandria, Aug. 6, 1838.

"My attendance at the harem has been followed with the most cheering success. I was received and honoured with every possible distinction, and continue to be welcomed by the royal party as if I were one of themselves. Since I have been at Rosetta, Mahomet Ali has sent me the kindest messages, saying to the governing Effendi that every possible care was to be taken of me, for that he (Mahomet Ali) was much interested in my recovery, as well as the rest of his family. Indeed I may say that from the time I was first taken ill, his attention and kindness have been of the most marked character.

"I am to receive £10 a month for my attendance on the harem. I might have had three times as much had I wished, but this I thought was just, and therefore settled it so. My illness, humanly speaking, originated from my excessive exertion in the school and at the harem, especially the latter, having during the hot months to pass through the desert part of the

Nile to the Casa Debara, when the heat exceeded 114° of Fah. The sand wind, also, with its clouds of dust, was too much for my strength, and the table of the harem added not a little to my illness. The dishes have often been too much for me ; I have tried again and again to avoid them, but nothing would do with Her Highness but that the dish she most esteemed should be tasted by her teacher day after day."

" Cairo, Oct. 4, 1838.

" Many harems have solicited my time, but I could not spare it from my own schools. I have no difficulty in introducing books, but I believe it would be a very laborious task to persuade them to read even one. There is, from the highest to the lowest, a gross neglect of everything mental. A few of the ladies can read, so can Her Highness ; but it generally consists in reading petitions, the Koran, &c. Thus my time is chiefly spent in teaching what I most dislike, viz. needlework, fancy work, drawing, &c. &c. I often feel, when I return home heated and fatigued, that I have no hope in my labour. Nevertheless I persevere, leaving the result with God.

" The box arrived perfectly safe, and in excellent order. The Tiverton fancy work, which formed part of its contents, could not, I think, be surpassed in taste, design, or execution. I could not present the box to Nazly Hanum so soon as I wished, owing to Hekekyan's being with the Pasha at Alexandria. He arrived on Friday the 28th ult., and on Saturday I invited him with his wife and family to view the collection. He was much struck with the beauty of the numerous bags, mats, purses, shoes, baby linen, &c., but he was especially gratified by the sight of the scientific plates for the little princes. He observed, ' It is a knowledge of those things we most need.' I after-

wards received directions from him to present the box on Monday, it being His Highness's intention to be at the Casa Debara at 3 p.m. of that day. Sunday night, previous to this my first introduction to the Pasha, I spent much in prayer, that the Lord would overrule every event for good. On Monday I packed the box with the greatest care, placing every article to the best advantage, and in the order I thought I should require it. On entering the harem, I, as usual, presented myself to Her Highness, and the box was immediately sent for. It soon came, and to my great mortification she would have it opened. I could not say nay, but I told her the Pasha had intimated that they were first to be presented to himself. This she told me she knew, but she persisted in having it opened. The box was therefore soon emptied of its contents, as well as a large basket which contained the dolls, books, &c. One thing was thrown here, another laid there, so that they soon presented an elegant mass of confusion. I had to bear it with the greatest patience, dreading every moment that the Pasha would arrive. I should have observed, that when I arrived at the harem, I found more than a hundred ladies, chiefly those of the Beys and the principal Effendies, who had evidently been invited for the occasion. The things were much admired, and as I drew them from the box, Her Highness frequently exclaimed in terms of admiration. At first I observed that (after the true Turkish fashion) she was on her guard not to exhibit too much surprise, but afterwards, when the best things were exhibited, this caution was neglected. On presenting the Queen's picture, she immediately asked me if the Queen was married; and it was with much difficulty I could make her understand that Her Majesty had no husband, but reigned in her own right, alone. But when I told her that the Queen of England was equal in power to any king, or, as I termed it, sultan, she

seemed lost in wonder. I now put the things again into the box, and had scarcely finished when the Pasha and his suite arrived. The princess, her sisters, the Pasha's wives, and his little sons, all left the harem to meet him. He was in the central building, which is situated between the palace of general reception and the harem. The box was soon sent for, also myself: I was introduced into the apartment, which is splendidly furnished after the French fashion; and here I saw what perhaps no other European female ever beheld, the Pasha Mahomet Ali, standing like one of the patriarchs of old in the midst of his own family. On my entrance he smiled, and asked me how I was, with the greatest condescension. The box was then opened, and his wives, the mothers of Mahomet Ali Bey and Allam Bey, stood on each side of His Highness, while Nazly Hanum stood in front, presenting the things she thought the most beautiful, the wives at the same time showing him the baby linen. He appeared to look with fond affection on them all. There seemed no restraint before him, for little Mahomet Ali Bey and Allam Bey were really troublesome to him, first one and then the other pulling his dress, with the greatest impatience to know the use of the several things. The poor fisherman and his wife were soon put off their stand, Mahomet Ali Bey thinking them better apart. He was delighted with his toy, but the Pasha paid most attention to the orrery and the model of the Thames Tunnel, both of which he explained to them; the Queen's visit to the city was also critically examined. His Highness now turned to me and said that Hekekyan Bey had explained to him the subject. After the things had been fully admired, and richly tumbled about, the Pasha gave me the night salutation, a signal for all to withdraw, and I left the room with the princess. I soon left the Casa and returned home. If the character of the Pasha were to be judged of by

what I saw in this short interview, it would shine to the greatest advantage as a domestic man. It is well known in Egypt that he is one of the most indulgent of fathers, but I did not expect to see so fond a parent. He is rather a short man, very aged, with a dark sun-burnt, and of course wrinkled visage, a milk-white beard, and eyes black, deep, and piercing. He was dressed in the plainest manner, not having the slightest ornament of any description upon his person.

EXTRACTS OF A LETTER FROM HEKEYAN EFFENDI TO
MRS. LIEDER (LATE MISS HOLLIDAY).

“ *Cairo, Dec. 7, 1838.* .

“ I found your letter on my return from Old Cairo, and as I cannot find time to call, I prefer writing you a long letter in reply. I begin by informing you that H. H. the Pasha was extremely affected at the piety and philanthropy of the English ladies, composing the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East, and recommended H. H. Nazly Hanum and the princesses of his family to follow their example in his dominions.

“ I send a tin box of various articles of Eastern female clothing and ornaments, made by the Pasha's harem purposely as a return for the samples sent by the Society. You will also see a literal translation of their letter to the Society, which shows their proper feeling, and the beneficial effects which have been operated by the encouragement and the approbation given by the Society. The blue crape *Tarka*, or head scarf, which is H. H. Ibrahim Pasha's lady's own handy work, was intended for Her Majesty the Queen, thinking that Her Majesty was Patroness of

the Society, so the Kaddin Kiaia informed me; but I observed to her that the desire should be merely mentioned to you, and recommended that nothing of the kind should be signified in their letter, for I explained to her and made her fully comprehend the private nature of the whole proceeding. The books sent out for Mahomet Ali Bey were forwarded to me, with an order from H. H. the Pasha that I should translate them into the Turkish language. I, of course, feel in duty bound to lose no time in its accomplishment, but on account of my many pressing occupations I shall be under the necessity of deferring the work of translation to my leisure hours. I could wish the books were in French, because we have so many Arabs who know French, and who are not too actively employed.

“ I do not intend to flatter you when I inform you that they are all very much pleased with you in the harem, and Mrs. Hekeleyan tells me that they talk of English ladies in raptures, declaring that they are the cleverest and best behaved of the Frank ladies they have ever seen or heard of. It is a pity you cannot converse with them. I recommend you above all things to study Turkish: you will do no real good until you can talk to them. Unless you are able to communicate your sentiments, you will succeed in nothing further than the mere teaching them to sew, to embroider, &c.; manual occupations, which, from their nature, may, however, tend to clear the way to their hearts. I cannot too strongly recommend you to be extremely watchful and circumspect, for the sake of your ulterior success, or rather the success of your successors. First let the fruit ripen, then pluck it. You cannot hastily ripen it, by concentrating upon it the total quantity of heat and air which it is necessary that it should absorb and digest, perhaps for a long

succession of years, before it attain to maturity ; for in attempting to force it, you may be sure of scorching and blasting it in its infancy. Then, not they will be to blame, but it is you who will be filled with sorrow for being the cause of the mischief. I write to you in the figurative style of the East, and I hope that you understand my meaning. I hope you will not think of answering me with the parable of the London Christmas pear."

Literal Translation.

TO THE MOST HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY WHICH TAKES THE TROUBLE AND FURNISHES THE MEANS, NECESSARY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION IN THE FEMALES OF EASTERN COUNTRIES.

" This time we have received a document of friendly testimonials from your part, together with choice presents of inestimable value, and of uncommon beauty and elegance, being the fruits of your ever virtuously employed hands, in your hours of convenience.

" Your benevolent souls, in the plenitude of Divine piety, impelled by an ebullition of compassion and affection for humanity, have manifested to a high degree a joyful perseverance to promote among ourselves, that is to say, among the generality of females, the acquisition of instruction and education, for the purpose of their happiness and tranquillity in life ; and truly you have been to us a subject of a wonder, of satisfaction, and example worthy of our imitation.

" Being the followers of the amiable example of your excellencies in the guardianship of innocence and

purity, we also feel that it is an obligatory duty to exert ourselves, to the degree permitted by the isolated state in which we live, to employ the means and the ways which are necessary for the happiness of those who will be parents, and who will have families and children in these countries; that is to say, to spend and to sacrifice a portion of the power and means which God has granted us, for the purpose of instructing and educating those of our girls who have blossoming on their cheeks the flowers of youth.

“ Moreover, the philanthropy which you have manifested in favour of the instruction and education of the females of our countries, has filled our hearts with tender emotion; your approbation of the feeble degree of effort and zeal which have been employed by us towards the same object, has encouraged us; and the testimonials of affection which you have vouchsafed to present us, have pleased us.

“ In conclusion, we request that you will be pleased to accept, as a drop of our thankfulness and gratitude, and in our obedience to the received usages of friendship, the poor offerings which are of things in estimation with us, and which are the fruits of the occupation of our friendly hands; and we pray God the Most High, that you receive eternal rewards for your benevolent labours to augment happiness among the females of the divers countries of the East, and that it may increase in you as it increases in them—and we take this opportunity to inform you that your delegate, the gentlewoman Holliday, employed in your service in these parts, has pleased us with her rare knowledge; and her exemplary conduct has laid the foundations of affection.

(Signed)

The eldest daughter of H. H. Nazly Hanum.

The youngest daughter of H. H. Zeineb Hanum.

The lady of H. H. Ibrahim Pasha.

The lady of H. H. Ibrahim Pasha the younger.

The lady of H. H. Tossoun Pasha.

The lady of H. H. Abbas Pasha.

The lady of H. H. Ismael Pasha.

The lady of H. H. Ahmed Pasha.

136th day of Ramazan, 1254."

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MRS. LIEDER.

" Cairo, Sept. 6, 1839.

" I have for several months past suffered from the excessive heat, yet think God I have been able to continue in partial attendance on the royal harem. Two months back I consented to visit that of Habib Effendi, who was the Governor of Cairo before Abbas Pasha. This I was strongly tempted to do, not only from its being the first harem next to that of the royal family, but because it would give me greater influence with the high Turkish party, his wife being a near relative of the late Sultan. My principal object, however was the character and age of his two daughters. I found them anxious to acquire the English language. One had learned a little French, and the other had begun drawing, and writing, both being self-taught. They told me they greatly felt the want of knowledge, but they knew if they once understood English or French they would be no longer ignorant. I felt surprised to hear such sentiments from the proudest of the Turks, but soon learned that their only brother had been educated in Europe, and that when he died, a few months back, he urged upon them to seek after better knowledge than sewing handkerchiefs. They possess a good selection of French and Italian books, with some

mathematical instruments, all of which they are desirous to learn the use of, because they say it was in such things their beloved brother delighted. They are about sixteen or seventeen years of age. Their mother is one of the most dignified women I have seen."

Her Majesty having received the gift of needlework mentioned above, was graciously pleased to present a beautiful likeness of herself to the ladies of the royal harem through the Society.

" Cairo, Feb. 18, 1840.

" You will be glad to hear of the arrival of Her Britannic Majesty's gift, and that the Pasha ordered it to be received in the most honorable manner, commanding that every possible respect should be shown to the Queen's likeness. It is now suspended in the grand saloon of the palace, by the side of that of Mahomet Ali himself. On the day that it was presented, the royal carriages were sent to convey to the harem the following English ladies, at that time in Cairo :—Mrs. Dr. Duff, Mrs. W. Kennaway, Mrs. Briggs of Alexandria, Mrs. Green of Constantinople, with Mrs. Krusé, and myself. The picture was borne by our servants, shoulder-high, and guarded by Janisseries, each bearing his silver stick of office; and further to show our respect and loyalty, the box was covered with our national flags. Thus escorted, it was attended by Mr. Lieder and Mr. Briggs on horseback. The carriages preceded the picture just in time for me to present it in form to the chief Aga of the eunuchs, who, with his officers, was stationed for that purpose at the state entrance of the harem. Its reception I will not enter upon, as the pens of Mrs. D. and Mrs. K. will detail every particular; suffice

it to say, that it is highly valued by all the royal females in the harem. 'What hath time wrought!' A few years ago, the likeness of the human figure would have been deemed sacrilege in Egypt, although it had been, as in this case, that of a young and beautiful queen.

"Enclosed you will find some interesting papers on Egypt's future hopes. They will bear their own testimony to your efforts and example. It is pleasing to find the very name of your Society adopted by your imitating sisters of the East. *The Egyptian Society for Promoting Female Education in the East* consists of all the principal Turkish and Arab ladies in Cairo, its patrons being the royal sisters themselves. It is perhaps at this time the greatest wonder in this land of wonders. A few years back, who among you, even the most sanguine, would have anticipated such a result? and although it is not exactly the thing we would have chosen, I feel thankful for this. But it is 'not unto us, but unto the name of the Lord,' that we must give the glory.

"I cannot sufficiently thank the Committee, or express how useful the valuable scientific instruments they sent out have proved to me. They have attracted the highest interest and admiration. Mr. Lieder has shown them to all the Beys connected with public instruction. They clearly saw the value of them as a means of disseminating knowledge, especially the astronomical and botanical plates. We are to have an exhibition of the phantasmagoria, at which they are anxious to attend. Edheem Bey was here seeing the schools, and with him those gentlemen he had brought from France and England. He is

desirous that I should help him in forming an infant school, which is to commence with 150 children."

Note from Hekekyan Bey.

"I send you the original letter of the Secretary of the Society in Egypt for the establishment of female education, together with its version in English. A strict translation would be incomprehensible, and therefore I have confined myself to render the sense of the composition. I congratulate Mrs. Lieder on the success of her labours in the harem, and it must be highly gratifying to the ladies in England, that the quiet and persevering and unpretending efforts of Mrs. Lieder have had so good an effect. Now that the seeds are sown, we must wait with patience the vivifying effects of time, and 'laissez faire' to see them germinate, grow up, and bear fruit."

Translation of the Letter from the Secretary of the Egyptian Society for Female Education to Mrs. Lieder.

"A letter, purporting the favourable reception of the trifling presents of work done by Egyptian ladies, and which were sent through your medium to the ladies of the Society for the Encouragement of Female Education in the East, as also the gracious permission of Her Majesty the Queen that a copy of her portrait should be sent, having given the Society deep-felt satisfaction, as well as encouragement for their future labours, I am commanded to request, in a special manner, that you will kindly submit to the ladies of your Society, the sense of gratitude which animates Her Highness in particular, as well as the high degree

of education which Her Highness derives from the example of the charitable endeavours of the ladies of your Society to better the general condition of humanity, by the diffusion of moral and scientific instruction.

“ I am also commanded to make it known to you, for the information of your Society, that the male children of our Lord, together with those of the noble families of Egypt, Arabia, Syria, and Darfour, are now receiving education in a college expressly founded for them, under European governors and teachers ; and that the young pupils to whom you taught needlework last year are at present occupied in learning the Turkish, Persian, and Arabic languages, and that, availing themselves of the assistance of the translated works which you introduced, they are studying geography, and the rudiments of arithmetic, and of the practice of drawing ; and that, in fine, fully persuaded that the diffusion of the blessings and advantages of morals and education amongst mankind is one of the sources of the purest temporal gratification and future bliss, flowing from the precepts of religion, we are resolved to persevere towards the development of a course so replete with honorable contentment.

(Signed) HEIBET ULLAH, Secretary.”

Cairo, May 4, 1846.

“ What a change has been wrought within the last ten years ! When I first came to Egypt there was not a woman that could read, and now I have the pleasing gratification of knowing that some hundreds possess this power, and that they have the best of books to read. Thus I have been permitted to see, year after year, the gradual growth of some sort of civilisation, whilst the thrice-barred harems of

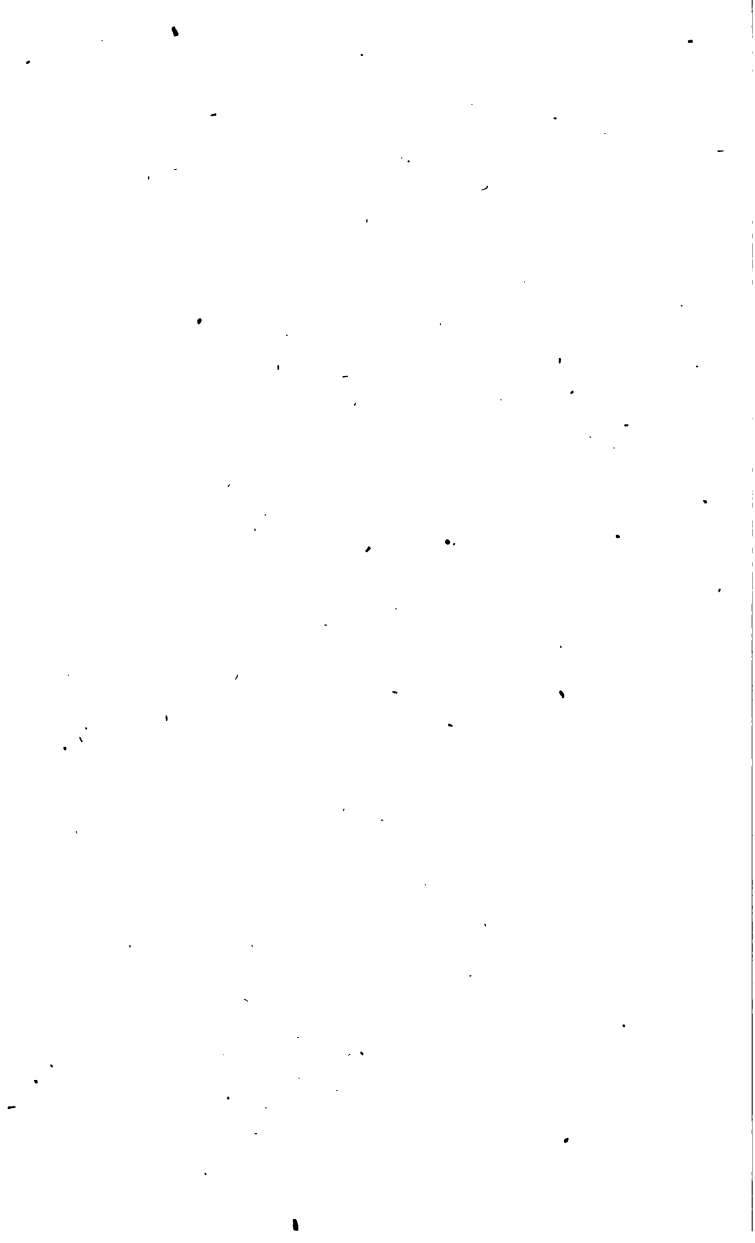
Egypt now gladly open their tremendous portals for the free access of European improvement. What a change has come over the royal harem since I first knew it! almost every usage and thing is purely European; every taste has altered; and the once-despised Frank is now hailed with welcome.

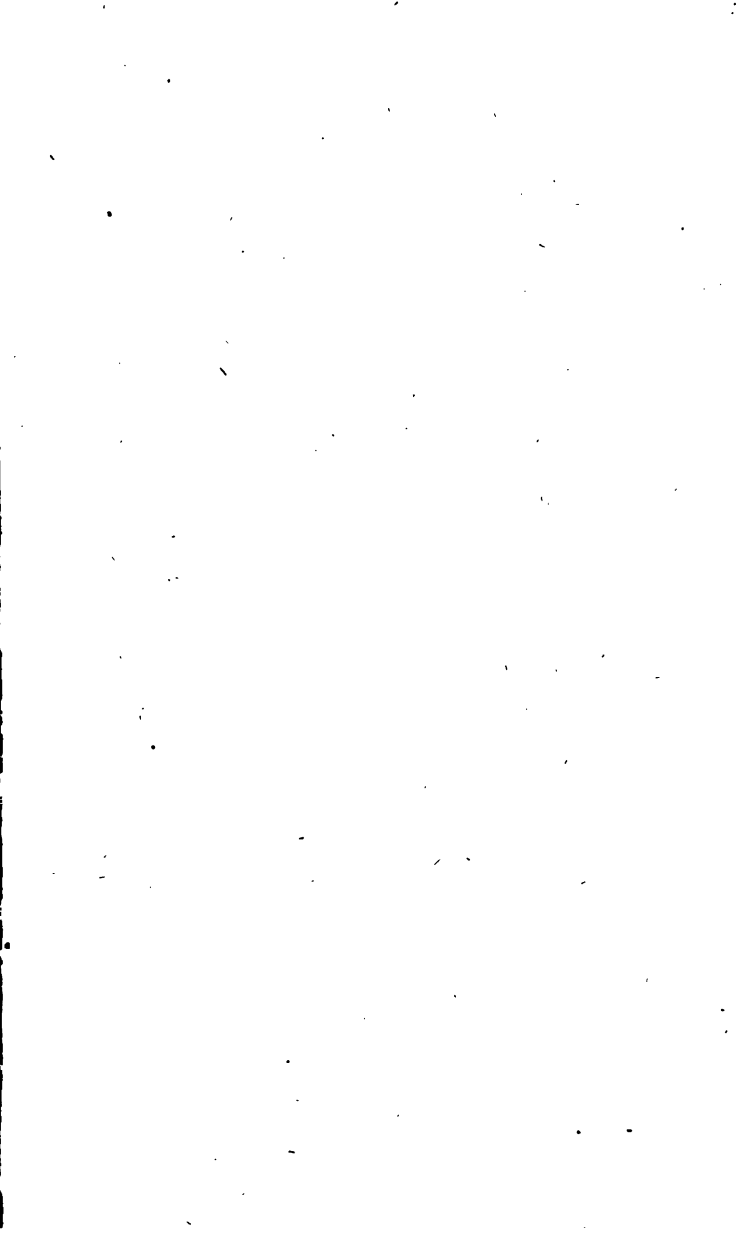
“All is changed or changing, so that the customs of this most ancient land (emphatically called the unchanging East) will shortly die away, or else be found only in some more distant country. The sooner the harem system dies the better; it has been the greatest curse that Mahometanism ever brought upon the land, and the most enlightened among the Orientals agree that it presents the greatest impediments to female education. Yet the blow has been struck, and the root will continue to wither and fade: for what they would not yield to reason and to mind, they have yielded to French flowers and European finery. The desire for trifles is preparing and has prepared the way for the nobler gifts it is in our power to bestow.”

ERRATA.

<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read.</i>
97	2	innuendoes	innuendocs.
101	19	is	are
107	28	efforts a community	efforts of a community
121	5	regeneration	regeneration
121	16	is	are











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